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BEATRICE;

OR,

THE GOLDSMITH'S DAUGHTER

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AUTHOR OF "THE DANCING FEATHER," "OLPH," "PAUL DEVERELL," ETC.



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BEATRICE:

THE

GOLDSMITH'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

'NAY, Beatrice, what seest thou at the lattice? This is the third time in the last five minutes thou hast been to look out thereat. What is it thou seest?' called out, somewhat sharply, David Goulbourne, the well-known artificer in gold and silver, to his fair daughter—

'I thought I heard horsemen, father,' responded the maiden, dropping her eyes and blushing, as she returned to her seat at the round table, at which father and daughter were partaking of their evening meal.

The table was set in the small, neatly-furnished room over his shop, which fronted on one of the most noted thoroughfares of London; and as it was now within an hour of sunset of a sunny, shining day, the street was lively with passers-by, some hastening homeward from their toil, others enjoying the soft beauty of the hour.

The golden sunbeams shone aslant into the small, narrow lattice of the goldsmith's humble abode, and were reflected from a wax-polished beaufet on one side of the room, and from a

silver can and tea urn that graced it, and which the diligent care of Beatrice always kept as bright as a mirror.

It revealed also half a dozen plain oaken chairs placed against the wainscot, a mahogany stand in the corner supporting a large King James's Bible with brazen clasps, burnished with the frequent handling of devout hands; a stern likeness of the late Protector, and another of John Knox over the mantel-piece, showing plainly the religion as well as the politics of the worker in gold.

A door ajar in the back of this sitting-room gave a glimpse of an inner bed-room, with white curtains and counter-pane, fringed by the fair fingers of the maiden whose apartment it was.

A door on the left led into a chamber less tasteful in its aspect, where her father slept.

Above this was a garret occupied as a dormitory. Beatrice had prevailed upon her indulgent father to have one of the windows in the room lengthened to the floor and move on hinges.

Upon this pleasant look-out, which commanded the street both up and down, she kept her numerous vases of flowers, for to flowers and birds she was very partial, and two gilt cages, one of which contained a robin-red-breast and the other a parroquet, as brilliant in plumage as he was noisy in tongue.

'Horsemen! and why should a maiden like thou run to gaze on horsemen?' said her father after she had resumed her seat at the table. 'Honest men go a-foot; and rogues ride now-a-days. If thou hearest a horseman thou mayest be sure it is a king's follower; for none others than these ride save lacquies; and for a king's follower thou art too humble, and for a lord's lacquey too high! So thou hast nought to do with gazing on horsemen. Besides, thou art too fair, my daughter, to have thy face seen at the lattice too often; for, the gay gallants that are about the Court may chance to espy thee and trouble thee. A maiden's eye is soon caught by silks and bravery.'

'Not mine, father.'

'True: thou art discreet and virtuous, and I would not be afraid to trust thee even to carry the jewel I am now setting for the king's ring to him in his own palace. Nevertheless I will not place thee in the way of danger needlessly. Nor should thou put thyself in the way. These are licentious and free times since the king came back, and if lord's daughters are not safe from his arts and power, I may not be without fear for my darling child. But thou art in the keeping of God's mercy, and I'll

not fear. But thou shouldst not run to the lattice, but rather retire quiet from it, when thou hearest the voice of horsemen gallivanting past. What didst thou expect to see?'

Jerry, the apprentice, sir, when he came in told me that it was noised about that there would be a fray between the people of the French and Spanish Ambassadors, I did not know when they might be passing, and besides, sir, I wished to see the procession!

'What procession? How shouldst thou hear of processions, Beatrice? I know of none!'

'Because you keep so close at home, dear father!'

'And do you go abroad to hear them?'

'No, father, I hear all from Jerry!'

'The idle rogue is full of his tales I dare say; for I ne'er send him on an errand that he doth not take four times as long to do it in, as need be! What hath he told thee?'

'That some new Ambassador from beyond sea is arrived and waits two leagues below town, where the king and his court and all the ambassadors and their servants, a great and brave display, are going to meet him to escort him to town!'

'I heard something of it, by a customer that came in to have me set a loose diamond in his collar clasp. It is the Swedish Ambassador, and the King wishes to show him all honor since the peace. But I heard not of any fray!'

'Yes, sir, it is said that the French Ambassador claims precedence in the escort and the Spanish Ambassador

determines to have it for himself, and so they are to fight, Jerry says for the precedence. And the king has ordered that none of our own people shall meddle with it, let them do what they will?"

'The King is right! Let the Don and Monsieur fight it out, and no Englishmen interfere. It were a blessing if they would cut each other to pieces. Their presence here in London with their Roman Catholic priests and monks and their catholic chapels in their palaces is a great evil. The King and Court are beginning already to ape this foreign worship, and show it power! Let them fight it out! But it can hardly be to-night it is advancing late, and the King has not yet left his palace or he would pass here!'

'They say he took barges and went by water while his courtiers rode down to Pell-Mell, there to form!'

'It may be so, it may be so! But I care little for it! We have of late, got so used to broils here in London under the King's loose government, that one or more excites no curiosity. Yet, it would be a sight worth seeing, a fair bout with the sword between Don and Frenchman! I think I would look at it myself should it take place in the neighborhood! But for thee, it were better thou shouldst keep out of sight. If I mistake not I saw a Court gallant stopping opposite the house this morning and looking up at the balcony.'

'Father, your tankard is out! Shall I draw thee more ale?' asked Beatrice, rising and taking the tankard to a stone pitcher upon a side-table

over which she stooped low to pour out the malt beverage which on that day supplied the place of tea and coffee, striving to conceal by the act the blushes which mantled her cheeks.

'No more, child! I have eaten full heartily. I'll just step out, after saying grace, and learn the truth of this rumor. I like not to see Englishmen in arms against each other, as they have too long been, but when it comes to Don and Frank, then I can look on and bid them God speed till there be not a man of them left!'

Thus speaking, David Goulbourne clasped his hands upon the table's edge, and closing his eyes returned in a few appropriate words, thanks for the mercies he just received. Beatrice the while stood by the table with her eyes dropped to the floor and her hands folded with reverent devotion upon her bosom. As soon as he had pronounced 'Amen' she ran and got for him his broad brim hat cocked in front, and his cane, and opened the door for him.

'I will ere long be in again. See that thou keep thy face away from the lattice!' he said as went out, 'and for safety I will lock the door!'

He then turned the huge key and dropping it into the capacious pocket of a broad-skirted coat, he walked to a gossiping neighbor's a few doors up the street, to hear the news.

'Ah, neighbor Goulbourne, good even,' said the brazier, before whose stall the goldsmith stopped; for at this period most of the shops were stalls built out from the front wall upon the sidewalk which they nearly occupied, often compelling foot-pas-

sengers to take the middle of the unpaved streets. 'It is a rare thing to see thee abroad save with thy apprentice following thee with some notable job thou hast just finished for some lord or lady. I am glad to see thee! Sit down. But hast thou heard the news?'

'Nay, I seldom get time to listen to it, Master Brazier; you know that I am a man of small talk. But if thou hast anything worth the listening I will hear it, for I have a half hour's leisure after supper, and may as well hear thee as walk further.'

Thus speaking the goldsmith seated himself upon an oaken bench at the door of the stall.

'But, methinks; your shop looks something more warlike than usual.'

'Yes, Master Goldsmith, I have had no less than nine swords and spears sent in to me to look over and repair in the last two hours.'

'They look like the arms of the train-bands.'

'You have guessed rightly, neighbor. Thou knowest that the Lord Mayor hath ordered out the London train-bands.'

'Not I.'

'It is true. We are like to have a stirring time of it, if one or the other don't yield before weapons are crossed!'

'What is thy news? What hast thou to tell?'

'Why you must know, Master Goulbourne, that the French and Spanish ambassadors are at swords' peck with each other, their nations you know, being at war. Well, here comes to day my lord, the Swedish ambassa-

dor, with a train of fifty followers and sends up word to the king, and the king gives orders to go down and meet him and escort him to the city at nine to-morrow morning.'

'Not to-night then?'

'No, to-morrow. It will be a rare display! All the Court will go, and a brave sight it will be. The French lord has sent word to the king that he claims the foremost place before the Spanish lord. The Spaniard takes fire at this, and sends word to the Frenchman that if he wants the first place he must fight for it! The king hearing of it, says let no man meddle with them, but let them have it out as they will. The Lord Mayor to keep the peace of the city, and prevent any of the English joining in on either side has ordered out the train-bands early to-morrow morning. So you see that we have rare news. Nothing like it since March came in. If thou keepest at home thou mayst see the fight, for the street up which the Spanish ambassador will come is nearly opposite, and the procession will pass here. I hope the Don may get the best of it, for we naturally hate the French.'

'I hate no man for his country, but for his religion. Master Brazier. They are followers of the Pope both, and therefore, God willing, let them cut one another's throats. It were a blessing to get them out of the land.'

'That is true. They tell me that they have mass at their chapels same as in Rome; priests, virgin Marys and all.'

'They tell thee true, neighbor Brazier,' answered David Goulbourne

somewhat sternly. 'They have mass and vespers and confession, and all other Babylonish abominations at their houses. And men do say that the Lady Castlemaine has prevailed on the king to go and bend the knee to these idols of Rome!'

'My Lady Castlemaine will make the king do anything, if all tales be true. It is a scandal to England that its king should keep so publicly a mistress; and the new young queen so fair and gentle as she is.'

'This is the least of Charles' iniquities. But we must submit, and pray for better days. You and I did our best under the great and good Oliver to maintain pure faith in the land. We must now be silent, and let the powers that be, have rule.'

'I ne'er thought the king would ha' gone to mass, after he promised to sustain the church. But little religion has he or his court, if all tales be true!'

'They are true. The king and his nobles, and the ladies of his court have given themselves up to sport and licentiousness. The king leaves the government of the kingdom to his officers, and troubles them only when he asks for money to expend on his pleasures. Thank God he hath some wise men and honest to manage his kingdom or we should soon go to pieces!'

'The times are evil indeed.'

'Does the king employ thee now, Master Goulbourne?'

'Yes, at times. I am now cutting a clasp given him by the Queen of Portugal his mother-in-law.'

'The king knoweth thy predilection

for Oliver, yet employeth thee for thy great skill. Hast thou ever seen the king in person?'

'Thrice, and talked with him.'

'Did he allude to thy having taken arms in the Parliament war?'

'Jokingly, as his manner is. But as it is dangerous joking with a prince, I did not answer him, but turned the talk to my handicraft, in which he seemed to take great interest. He made me one day take his watch to pieces and put it together before him.'

'The king knoweth how to make himself agreeable when he lists. If he could get rid of his mad love for the beautiful lady Castlemaine, he would make a good king. But she rules him, and he will do any folly she bids him.'

'The king would find others to enslave him were she out of the way. The whole court follows his example. Every noble has his mistress, and the maids of honor are every soul of them light jades. Thou didst hear how the pretty marchioness took it into her head last week to dress up as an orange wench, and go through the streets crying oranges?'

'Yes, and was found out by her fine shoes and hose, which she forgot to change; and she escaped the mob only by means of two or three nobles and their servants, who had just come in town from hunting, and rescued her out of their hands.'

'All the court is in this mad, loose wanton way,' said the goldsmith.

'There will be a judgment upon us unless things are reformed at court!'

'Do you think it right, neighbor

Goldsmith, you a Jevout man in the conventicle, to do this light work for the court? Is it not aiding them in their extravagant follies?"

"It is my trade and by which I live, friend Brazier; I can't choose my customers. Besides, if the king command, I must obey; for the apostle saith: "Honor the king, and be in submission to the powers that be." Besides, I have a daughter for whom, in these troublesome times, it becomes me to provide."

"Doth the king pay like other men?"

"My price and no more! I ask a king no more than I would ask a commoner. I regulate my price according to my conscience, not according to the wealth of my customer. Yet the king hath given me presents over and above my work, which for my child's sake I have accepted."

"She will be rich, if rumor hath the truth of it," said the brazier smithy. "And, truly, she deserveth all thy care for her, for she is both virtuous and fair. Keep her close, neighbor, and let not the wicked eyes of these gay young court lords light on her, as one hath already."

"One? What mean you?"

"Nay, be not alarmed, for it is nothing. This morning, as I was burlishing the hilt of a sword, there rides up to my window a brave young noble, followed as I saw by two servants leading four horses. He says to me, after politely passing the time of day:

"Pray, good brazier, who dwelleth in yonder house with the balcony?" and he poin'ted to thine."

"And what saidst thou?"

"I told him that there lived David the Goldsmith, jeweller to the crown."

"By the mass!" said he, "he hath a fair daughter, more precious than the crown's jewels! Hath he not a daughter?"

"Old and ugly," said I, for I saw that he was inclined to give his thoughts to her, and I did by thee as I would have thee do by me, neighbor. "Old and ugly," said I!

"But what maiden did I see at the lattice?"

"(I'll have that lattice nailed up and closed ere another day!" firmly resolved David in his heart. "He who hath a fair daughter, I see, needeth a hundred eyes or a hundred locks.")

"If thou sawest any," I replied, "it must have been my daughter, who ran up there an hour ago to see the old and ugly daughter of the goldsmith."

"Hath thy daughter dark eyes and hair?" said my lord quickly.

"Yes," I answered.

"And teeth like pearls?"

"Even fairer than pearls!"

"And lips like rubies?"

"Even fairer than rubies," I answered him.

"And a hand and arm and finger that would match that of Dian?"

"Thou hast described her, my lord," said I. "It is my daughter thou hast seen!"

"Then, by thy beard," said he, "I swear thou hast the fairest daughter in all London! When she returneth, make my respects to her, and I will come and see her; for so fair a flower

must not be hidden here, but be brought out at court!"

"My good Lord Bresseles," said I, "I desire no such honor as you propose for her; therefore I shall decline it; and I will also take care that my daughter leaves London ere you can see her again!"

"Thou canst not hide her from me, but I will find her!" said he as he laughed and rode off followed by his two rogues with their hounds in lead!

"Thou hast done me a kindness, neighbor, by the friendly deception; for this lord Bresseles, is the most licentious young noble at court!"

"This I knew well, therefore did I put him off his scent as I did; for I knew that he would look for thy daughter here, not where he beheld her. I would have spoken to thee about keeping her within securely before now, but the order for the trainbands to come out and the rush of business that pressed upon me put it out of my mind. But, my good master Gouldbourne, I advise thee to have a shrewd eye upon thy fair daughter; not that there be any wrong in her, even in thought, but the young nobles go about as a roaring lion seeking whom they may devour; and as this lord Bresseles has got his eye upon her, if he sees her again there may be mischief in the end. Thou knowest that more than one beautiful maiden of her degree has been carried off from their fathers' houses, no man knoweth whither, by masked parties; no doubt these lordlings of the King's, who hath set them the example by his own unblushing vices. Have a care to thy child therefore!"

"I will do so, master Brazier, and do give thee many thanks for thy warning and thy friendly efforts in deceiving the noble. I have been guarded, and forbade her to be too much observed; and she willingly obeys me, for she is a pattern of a good daughter; still young maids wish to see and hear, and have curiosity, and one can't lock them up like muns. Still, I will keep closer watch than ever; for, as thou sayest, the times are loose, and an outrage upon a craftsman would be winked at by the King." Thus speaking, David Gouldbourne presently returned to his shop.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER the goldsmith had quitted his house to ascertain the particulars of the news which his apprentice had brought in a garbled shape to his fair daughter, the maiden clasped her hands together between joy and fear and said:

"How fortunate my father did not detect my heightened color when he spoke of the young man he had seen on the other side of the way! I know I must have looked very conscious! But why should I have feared to have him see my face! Why should I have looked embarrassed! Surely I have done nothing wrong! I could not help his looking over here! Indeed, as soon as I discovered that I was gazed upon by a handsome youth so richly dressed, I was so confused that I dropped my watering-pot, left my flowers, hastened in and shut the lat-

time ! What more could my father have asked ! What more could a discreet maiden do ! I did not even have the time to get a fair glimpse at his face, I was so surprised ! How very watchful my dear father is of late, especially since the king saw me, as he passed one day, and asked him if I were his daughter ; when he said no, but a friend's child, from the country ! Since then, if I but look out the lattice after breakfast, he bids me come in ! Indeed, I wonder he will suffer me to go out before breakfast and water my plants. Yet my father is right,' she added, with a thoughtful and grave air ; 'he is wise and good, and knows what is best for me ! The times are free, and a modest maiden should not give herself to the view of the dissolute nobles of the court. I will heed my father's wishes ; for the bold glance of a licentious noble would make me tremble ! Yet, yet—this young and handsome youth, with his fine expressive eyes, for I got a sight of his eyes, I was so fluttered when Ruth told me a handsome young lord was standing on the other side of the way watching me,—I cannot help thinking of him ! But as my father desires, I will try and keep within the lattice. How different did that fiery-looking young lord on his horse with his servants and dogs that I caught a glimpse of as he rode, how different did he appear from this youth on foot, though I doubt not both were equally noble from their dress ! The mounted nobleman stopped his horse full and staring at me, had the impudence to kiss his hand and fling a kiss to me, and called me—the bold insul-

ter, 'his pretty wench !' till covered with blushes of shame and anger I shut the lattice which I had only opened to feed my canary. But the other was so different, and seemed to gaze so respectfully, and when he saw that I was confused he walked on quickly, and, as Ruth said, seemed to feel sorry that he had seemed so rude ! Ruth, who watched him, says he mounted at the next corner, before the haberdasher's shop, a superb horse held for him there by a footman in gold and blue lining, with a coronet on his cuff, and then rode off. It was, I fear, the hopes of seeing him as much as beholding the street fray between Spain and France that led me to move to the lattice whenever I heard the gallop of horses' feet ; for something secretly within my soul tells me he will surely come past again ! Hist ! There are horsemen coming down the street ! I will peep, but not be seen ! It can be no harm to see if I am not seen ! Besides, I may discover what is becoming of Ruth, who has been gone full two hours, to see if my new bodice is done for Fair-day !

Curiosity was stronger in her young bosom than fear of offending her father, and the beautiful daughter of David Gouldbourne, stole across the room to the lattice, and carefully drawing aside the curtain, she peeped out. We trust that she will be pardoned by all our fair readers, of the same age, when they are told, that in all things Beatrice Gouldbourne hitherto had been one of the discreetest maidens in London, and though beautiful not vain, and always honored her father in all his commands. But she

had never had a lover ! She had therefore, nothing to conceal from him ; nothing to tempt her to disobedience ; for every wish of her heart was gratified by him. But on this day an incident in her life had appeared and given a temptation to withhold, for the first time, all the truth from her father, when he questioned her touching her repeated journies to the lattice. But how could she tell him when she hardly knew what to tell him ? All that she could say was, that while she was watering her plants, her maid Ruth suddenly directed her attention to a young gentleman richly but not gaudily attired, who was lingering on the opposite side of the way ; and at the instant she looked up he, hurried away, giving her only time to see that he had a pair of very handsome eyes ; and that having mounted a horse near by, he galloped off without even casting his eyes back ! This was all she had to tell, with, added to which, a secret impression she had that he would ride by again ; and that she believed every horse that passed was his !

Now to tell this to her father in response to his inquiry touching her visits to the lattice, she felt would make him think her very foolish, and she felt that she would feel very foolish in telling him, so she blushed and looked confused and asked him, to change the subject, if he would take another can of ale.

Nevertheless, Beatrice felt, after he had gone out, great compunction at heart, for even this slight evasion ; and she half made up her mind that when he returned she would tell him the truth exactly as it was. But,

there was something so interesting in the handsome and diffident young stranger that she felt that if she told her father, she might never see him again ; and she was convinced that unless she did so she should be unhappy.

This, in confidence, she confessed to her lively and faithful maid Ruth, who was not backward in expressing her surprise that her young mistress should fall in love, at first sight, with one so far above her, or indeed even with an apprentice of her own grade.

'I am not in love, Ruth. You are very bold to say so !' answered the maiden, yet looking more pleased than vexed. 'How can I love a person whom I certainly should not know if I should meet him again.'

'I don't know, Miss Beatrice, but I've heard of such things in plays, and now I see it ; for you had no sooner turned and looked at him and caught his eyes fastened on you, than you colored and trembled, and looked as if his eyes had been lightning and had struck you, for it came upon you just as quick as a flash of lightning !'

'I confess I never felt such sensations before as I then experienced.'

'And your pulse beats wildly even now as you think about it,' said Ruth with perseverance. 'It is clear you are in love, Miss Beatrice.'

'No, no ! I shall not see him again and how can I love one who I have seen, and scarcely that, but once !'

'I don't know how it is. Why did you not feel so when that Lord Bresels, as they said it was, for I asked, stopped his horse full before the balcony and stared at you so bold and so

long, and even kissed his finger tips to you.'

'Do not speak of him! I was very displeased! He was very presuming!'

'And why did you not think the other bold and presuming? Only because you were pleased? Only because you looked and met his eyes and loved him! That is the short and long of it, Miss Beatrice!'

Ruth had in truth got 'the short and long' of it. The admiration of lord Bressels had inspired her with disdain and proud contempt for him while that of the other stranger had produced in her bosom opposite emotions. These facts she could not disguise from her own heart, and more than once after Ruth had left her to go to her dress-woman's for her, she had put to herself the inquiry,

'Is it so in truth? Does Ruth say rightly? Is this indeed the emotion of love I feel for this youthful stranger? Alas! I hope not; for if it is I am of all maidens the most miserable. I am but a poor goldsmith's daughter and he is, doubtless, noble. He would scorn the love and trample on the heart and deep affections of one like me. I pray God that I love him not. I will put the thoughts of him out of my heart; for it is very foolish and weak for me to suffer one, scarcely seen for a moment, to take such place in my heart and head as he has done this day. Lest it should be love, as Ruth, who always is so far-sighted, says, I will not think of him again; for it will be only to be miserable and to love without hope!'

Nevertheless, the maidens heart

had been too fatally penetrated by the ardent glance of the young man, for the impression to be effaced at her will. The more she tried to banish him from her mind the more she thought about him; till at length her nervous anxiety and curiosity led her to imagine that every horseman who passed might possibly be him, as every sound heard by one who looks for a friend's arrival is believed to be the signal of his approach.

Thus had she gone to the balcony impulsively from time to time, till she incurred her father's reproof. Yet even this did not abate her desire to know whether he might not again pass by; and, therefore, as we have seen, the goldsmith had not been many minutes gone before the sound of horsemen drew her again to the lattice.

Upon putting aside the curtain, that she might see without being seen, she beheld not the young stranger in the blue silken coat trimmed with gold buttons, and cloak lined with scarlet velvet, which was the costume of the nobleman, who had made such an impression upon her heart, but she beheld lord Bresselles himself. He had drawn rein and was gazing up at the balcony, as she put aside the inner curtain. But she had no sooner caught sight of him than she retreated, but not before he had got a glimpse of her.

'Aha! Do not fly, my angel!' he cried in the tone of gallantry, affected by the dissolute young nobles of Charles' Court. 'If thou withdraweth thine eyes, the sun sets! Mark-ham!' he said, turning to his attend-

ant, over whose saddle was slung pheasants, rabbits and other game, while behind were his servants with the tired dogs.

'Well, my lord.'

'As thy name is Markham, mark well this house. Dost heed me?'

'I will note it, my lord! But I know it already by the golden ring above the door, to be the shop of David the goldsmith.'

'So good. Let us ride on.' And the young nobleman who had carried on this brief conversation in an undertone, spurred forward, though not without a keen survey of the windows and doors as if he expected to get another glimpse of the maiden whom he had the vanity to believe was captivated by his personal appearance.

He did not proceed far, before he turned aside, and by means of a narrow street, gained his residence in one of the most lordly quarters of the town.

'Markham,' he said as he alighted at his gate, 'I want you to have your wits about you for me to-night.'

'Yes, my lord, I will sharpen them,' he answered.

'This David, the smith, whose house we rode past—'

'Where your lordship saw the fair puritan maiden.'

'Yes. I would have you go back and learn who she is; for I saw her this morning as we rode out of town, and then a sword-maker near by, did tell me she was his daughter, and was then out on an hour's visit. Yet I find her there, when we returned. Go and learn who she is; for there was something in that villainous low-browed Covenanters eye when he talked with me, that leads me to sus-

pect he was playing me foul; tho' by the cross I know not in what way.— But I liked not his words. Go and bring me presently all thou canst learn about her; for I have not seen this side of Espania, so fair a pair of eyes.'

'I will not be three hours gone, my lord!'

'The greater speed, the more gold in thy cap.'

The confidential lacquey of the young noble, bowing to his lord, spurred away to execute his orders.

Beatrice had no sooner beheld the bold and ardent gaze of the lord Bresselles than coloring with mortification and anger that she should have permitted him to see her, she dropped the screen of the lattice and drew quickly back from it.

'My father was right, when he bade me not to appear oftener than need be at the balcony! I have, doubtless given this vain nobleman if we may judge from his confident demeanor, reason to think I was looking forth to court his gaze. I am overwhelmed with shame! Hither comes Ruth! Ah, thou art back again. Where hast thou loitered? No doubt gossiping with all thy acquaintances in town by the time thou hast gone. I'll warrant me thou hast seen Spankie.'—This was all spoken partly with reproof, partly with a good-natured smile.

'I have, mistress Beatrice,' answered Ruth; 'and when you get a lover, and such a one as Spankie you'll —'

'Well, I dare say Spankie is the best fellow in town.'

'And he thinks me the handsomest maid.'

'He hath taste, for thou art handsome, Ruth, with thy ready smile and pleasant eye, and fair skin; to say nothing of thy rosy cheeks and pretty figure. Thou has beauty enough to set by the ears, half the spruce footmen in London, to say nothing of Spankie. So I will not reprove thee for stopping to chat with him. Hast thou brought my boddice, and did she line it with crimson silk and edge it with silver twist as the mode is?'

'It is a perfect beauty, Mistress Beatrice,' responded Ruth taking the article from a clean kerchief, in which it was nicely pinned up, and displaying it before her young mistress's gratified eyes with much pride and admiration. 'There isn't it a picture? There isn't its second in London, not even among the queen's maids of honor, I'll wager a silver groat?' said Ruth with emphasis.

'It is very pretty.'

'It will so become you. And when you put it on with the skirt which we made at home, and get on the lace sleeves your father bought you, and dress your hair *a la negligent* as they call it at court, you'd look out o' countenance the handsomest lady at court. My Lady Castlemaine would die of envy.'

'Don't compare me with Lady Castlemaine, Ruth.'

'Well, I won't! I didn't mean nothing. Some great ladies think no leas of her because she is the king's mistress and left her own lord and husband, but——'

'Never mind. Let me try on the boddice. It is most dark. I was

afraid you wouldn't be here so that I could try it on before night.'

'There is plenty of time! I'll draw the curtain and let in the light.'

'No, no. Don't, for mercy's sake draw it. I can see.'

'Why, what is the matter, Miss Beatrice?'

'My father says he would rather I should not have the lattice open.'

'For fear that some brave young lord will fall in love with thy pretty face and steal thee away. I would like to see one of 'em, lord or low steal me away.'

Beatrice smiled at Ruth's earnestness, and taking the boddice she bade her follow her into the inner room, to try it on her.

'Where has your father gone, Miss Beatrice?' asked Ruth. 'I found the street door locked, and came in by the area-door; so I know he is away!'

'He went out to hear the news?'

'News! There is enough of it. They say the Lord Rochester ran away with the handsome Mrs. Melvoro, and was pursued and overtaken, and the king was so angry, for he loved the lady himself, they say, that he shuts up my lord in the Tower. Then they say that at the birth-day ball, the king flirted with the beautiful Mrs. Stewart, in a scandalous manner before all the people, even kissing her in the corner, and the Lady Castlemaine was so angry that she left the room;—but the king went after her and asked her pardon. Then they say, that last night she, that is my Lady Castlemaine, invited the king to supper, with several lords, and the freshest, you know that was, flooded

the kitchen, so that the cook couldn't roast the goose, at which my lady swore that the goose should be roasted for the king, if the house had to be set on fire to do it by. Then it is a common report how——'

'There—that will do, Ruth! I don't want to hear any more court news?'

'It is the rarest news agoing. Lord! The genteels don't let a day pass that they don't give us something worth talking about.'

'Don't bring it to my ears, Ruth. I do not wish to hear of their absurd follies.'

'But I know what you would like to hear, Miss Beatrice!' said Ruth, as she fastened the last loop to its gold button in the front of the boddice.

'What is that?'

'The name of the young man in the blue silk coat, trimmed with gold.'

Beatrice looked both pleased and displeased, and said sharply:

'No more of this.'

'Nay, but I know, thou wouldst,' persisted Ruth.

'Well, what dost thou know?'

'Nothing.'

'Then what art thou prattling about. How sits the boddice?'

'Sweetly—like a queen's. Nothing could be fairer or more becoming. Bless me. If his Majesty should see you in it, he would not think a second time of my Lady Castlemaine, or even the splendid Stewart.'

Beatrice answered this speech by a smart slap, given in truthful indignation, upon the cheek of her maid.

'Wouldst thou insult me, Ruth? Know that a virtuous maiden is more noble, though she be but a serf's daughter, than a king's mistress.'

'Forgive me, Mistress Beatrice. I deserved the slap you gave me, but I didn't mean harm.'

'I trust not. Let thy thoughts run upon other matters than court gossip, and thou wilt be wiser of speech and happier thyself. Give me the skirt. Hast thou looped it up on the left side?'

'Yes, as you bade me.'

'I have no page to bear my train, nor would I have one. I wish to dress as becometh my degree.'

'Thou canst dress as richly if thou wilt, as any of them, for thy father hath the name of being the richest goldsmith in London.'

'I know nothing of his wealth. He gives me what is proper for me, and I am grateful and content. Thou knowest it was more his vanity than mine that got this dress.'

'He knew how nobly you would look in it. I wish he would come in and see you as you are. I wish you had one of those full length Venice mirrors I have seen in the palace. Thou couldst see thyself from head to foot, as others can see thee.'

'I will let my father's eyes and yours be my mirror, Ruth. He must soon be in. Where is Jerry? Hast thou seen him? He hath not had his supper!'

'He is an idler at his list, the lad! I dare say he is in some ale-house drinking in trifling stories, or else at the Ship and Anchor, hearing the sailor's talk. If master keep him not closer, he will run off to sea; for he hath more liking to salt-water, by his talk, than to working in gold and silver.'

'I will tell my father to keep him more strickly in.'

'There he comes. I hear the key turning in the door,' cried Ruth. Stand as you are, and your face turned just as it now is when he comes up, so that we may see if he knows you.'

'Doff your hat, Master David. A lady,' said Ruth, in a lively tone, which she tried to subdue.

The goldsmith obeyed her as he came up stairs, and entered the room. He did, indeed, start back and betray surprise and respect, for he bowed low and gazed earnestly upon the noble figure of his daughter, which was most happily set off by her new bodice and flaming skirt.

A laugh from Ruth, echoed by Beatrice betrayed her.

'It is Beatrice?' exclaimed the delighted goldsmith, as he advanced and proudly surveyed her, walking around her.

'No wonder, no wonder,' he added, mentally, 'that the nobles fall in love with her. I ne'er before thought her half so beautiful. She will out-lady them all, and in heart stand high above them all. God bless thee, my daughter,' he added aloud, 'thou art very fair to look upon, but thou art good also; and that gives glory to thy beauty.'

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the goldsmith had enough admired his daughter in the new bodice which he had, in his paternal pride insisted upon her having made, he suddenly became grave, and shaking his head, sighed and said, half aloud :

'It seems like dressing up the lamb for the sacrifice, if these lords or even the king should behold the glory of her beauty ; for no bird is too low for the royal aim ! It were better I dressed my child in the coarse cloth of the hind's daughter, than in times like these array her thus ! But she is not vain, and loves my praises only because it is her father who praises her. Beatrice !'

'My father ?'

'Go not forth to conventicle in this dress ! It makes thee prouder in air than beseeneth one of thy degree.'

'I will wear what pleaseth thee, sir !'

'I know it. Thou art all obedience ; therefore do I dislike to command ! Thou shalt wear it then ! I will not fear for this ; for He who hath bestowed upon thee this beauty will protect thee and not make it a snare to thee ! Go, now take it off, and come in and let us have our evening prayer and then to bed ! Where is Jerry ? the young truant ! He always is sure to be away till dark !'

'I saw him, sir, talking with a person up the thoroughfare,' answered Beatrice, 'and without doubt he walked away with him. It seemed to be a countryman.'

'No doubt, for he is always picking up strangers. I must tighten my rein upon him. I give him a finger's length and he takes an ell.

'You should keep him more at home I think, sir,' answered Beatrice, as she seated herself near the table, after resuming her plain but neat household costume. 'He sometimes comes in late, and disturbs us ; and this staying abroad may get him pressed into the sea-service.'

'I should be sorry, for he is a smart apprentice, and aids me greatly, when he will,' answered the goldsmith, as he opened the large family bible, and prepared to read a chapter, as his custom was, morning and evening. But he had hardly named the chapter, when a loud knocking at his door caused him to lay down the volume, while Ruth went to open it.

'It is the brazier, master!' she answered.

Bid him come in !

But his neighbor had already passed Ruth and was in the room.

'At your evening prayers, master Goulbourne, I see. I am sorry to interrupt ; but I come to tell thee that not five minutes ago a party of the Duke's men entered the Ship and Anchor and pressed twelve men and lads for the Dutch war that hath lately been declared ; and one of them was the apprentice Jerry ! This I learned from my own villain Lusking, who escaped them himself by leaping from the window. If thou sayest, Lusking will have up the apprentices—some score or more in a winking, and to the rescue !'

'Nay, as the lad hath sown let him reap. I thank thee, neighbor, for thy zeal in my behalf.'

'Not a bit. I knew the young man was valuable to thee, having great natural skill in thy craft, though he is scarcely twenty yet. But he can be rescued. There were but a dozen and a half of the Duke's men.'

'I shall take no steps. It would be resisting the law of the land, which ordains that, in extremities the king shall have power to take his subjects wherever and whenever he may, and

press them into his service. Let the boy go. He hath been of great trouble to me and my house of late. I will try to-morrow and get me another to supply his place. He ever loved too much the companionship of the men of the sea ; and now he will have his fill of their company. Wilt thou join with us, Master Brazier ?'

'I ne'r refused to receive a blessing, which always falleth where prayer riseth,' responded the brazier, as he doffed his cap and reverently seated himself in a rush chair placed for him by Beatrice.

When David Goulbourne had ended his evening sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, the Brazier resumed his cap and said :

'Now I will back to my stall ; for Lushing waits to know if I will give him leave to call out the 'prentices with their clubs.'

'Bid him keep quiet ; and haunt henceforth no more ale-houses lest he fall into the same net.'

'It were as easy to keep a cat out of the cream-pot as a 'prentice from a tavern, good Master Goldsmith,' responded the Brazier, laughing. 'I am sorry for thy loss, Good Mistress Beatrice, take an old man's advice, and keep thou within, and show not thyself on the balcony when young lords go prowling by ; for the balcony may prove as dangerous to thee as the tavern hath to thy father's 'prentice ; and there are other press-men besides the Duke for the navy.'

Thus speaking the frank Brazier took his leave, and was let out by Ruth, who was almost closing the door after him when a king's livery

man came riding up and said, as he arrested the door with his hand, bending from the saddle.

'Is thy master within, pretty one?'

'What hast thou to say to him varlet?'

'Would I be fit to serve the king if I would trust a woman with a secret?' answered the man laughing. 'bid him come and speak with me.'

'Thou art but a servant, and thou commandest like a lord.'

'A king's servant is a commoner's equal, jade! go bid thy master hither!'

'A sancy king's varlet is at the door, and would speak with thee, sir!' she said going up stairs.

'About the setting in the clasp,' said David as he rose up. 'I have not hurried it, and it is not yet done. I hope he hath not sent for it.'

'Art thou the gold-worker, old fellow?' demanded the king's lacquey, with the haughty impudence that he had full licence for from the manners of the court.

'What wouldst thou for I see by thy livery that thou comest from the palace!'

'The king hath sent word that thou must have the work he ordered thee to be done by eight of the clock in the morning. He would wear it in going to meet the Swedish ambassador. See that thou fail not on the peril of thy head!'

'It shall be done, tell his majesty.'

'Of course it shall be done. I shall be a fool to tell him that a London goldsmith condescended to obey his orders.'

Thus speaking the lacquey turned

his horse round so rudely as to press him against the door and upon the goldsmith, who had to spring back upon the stairs to save being crushed; for there was no side-walk, and the doors of the shop opened upon the dirty, rutted street.

'Like master, like man!' said a stout, short person that was passing, and saw this.

'Ah, friend Brewer, good even! Thou sayest truly! These fellows think there is no humanity in any veins but a noble's. Wilt thou walk in!'

'Nay, I was only passing on my way to the meeting.'

'I see thou hast thy sword and matchlock, which, in the dusk, I did not at first take notice of. Does the train-band meet to-night.'

'Yes; the major hath called us out to keep the peace against the minion, when it is thought the Don and Monsier 'll have a bout.'

'I heard of it. I could wish the king had chosen another than the Lord's day for his pageant.'

'So many wish. But when his majesty shall regard the Sabbath, he shall worship in conventicle. If he will have plays performed at the Duke of York's and go to them of a Sunday afternoon, he will not think much evil in turning out his Court in gala dresses to bring an ambassador into town. Good even, neighbor.'

'David Goulbourne was about closing his door, when a man who had been standing in the shadow as an eaves-dropper on the opposite side of the way, crossed the narrow street, and said,

'Art thou David the silversmith?'

'Yes,' answered he, seeing that the man wore the livery of a footman, but whose he could not distinguish in the deepening twilight.

'I have a jewel that I wish to match for my master. Wilt thou show me what thou hast?'

'Come in, and thou shalt look at them. Ruth, bring a candle and light my shoplamp. Walk in and round the stairway. Go: here is the doorway. Hasten, Ruth with the light.'

The waiting woman brought a rush candle to him as he was standing in a little passage at the foot of the steep stairs, near the inner door to the shop. The door was made of oak, very thick, and studded with iron nails, and strengthened with two cross bars of iron.

'By the rood, gold-man, thou hast a strong place to keep thy jewels in.'

'It is not best to tempt rogues by weak defences,' responded David, as he entered with the candle, and followed by the man.

The apartment or shop was the same size of the sitting room above it that is, about twelve feet square. Its walls on all sides were brick, very thick, and giving the place an air of strength. It had no other door than that which admitted them, and but one window, low and square, that admitted the light between its massive iron bars. Upon one side was a bench covered with tools for engraving, polishing and setting jewels, and opposite to it was a small chemist's furnace for assaying gold. A dark colored oaken case of drawers stood in one corner, each locked, and labelled with the class of its contents. as

'pearls,' 'rubies,' 'chalcydons,' 'agates,' 'emeralds,' 'diamond,' &c. &c., presenting to the covetous eye of the footman the idea of the most tempting treasures.

Beneath this chest of drawers was a small iron box about two feet square, and strengthened with hoops of iron, as if the material of which it was composed possessed not sufficient strength. It was secured by a huge padlock. All these things were noted by the speculative gaze of the lacquey, and he thought to himself that if he ever intended to be a thief he had good cause for beginning here. But the strength and care by which all seemed protected, gave him, he thought, but little encouragement of ever being successful.

'This would be a paradise for a skillful burglar, master goldsmith?' he said, as he saw David select a huge key from a bunch which he took from a drawer, the key of which he carried with him.

'It has been a prison, too, for me,' dryly answered the smith, as he stooped and fitted the ponderous key to the brazen padlock of the iron chest.

'A prison?'

'A burglar once found his way in here, but I discovered him ere he got off with his booty, and for a month I kept him chained to this padlock, and gave him jewels to live upon with a crust of bread a day by way of desert. He soon got tired of such fare, albeit I did not stint him, but placed a plateful before him daily. Sometimes I would vary his diet and fill the dish with gold and silver; but he grew thin upon this fare also; and im-

plored me for more crust; and so I kept him till he had given me back all my jewels, my diamonds, my gold and silver for crusts of black bread. At last I placed all that he'd stolen, in all nearly twenty thousand pounds worth I placed before him on a large platter I gave him no bread: I waited two days and he ate none of them, and with cries and importunities, begged that I would take all and give him but a piece of bread the size of my thumb, that he might not die, I yielded to his entreaties, and gave him the bread for the jewels. I then unbound him and bidding him to remember the lesson I had taught him, led him forth into the street and set him free.'

'Mercy! what a dreadful lesson he had,' ejaculated the lacquey, who had listed aghast with surprise, and effectually cured of the covetous emotions that the sight of the strong boxes of jewels had begun to awaken in his mind.

'It did him great good. He is now become an honest man, and a good citizen. It effectually cured him.'

'I should think so. But that is a beauty. It must be very valuable,' he added as he saw the jeweller draw from the safe a black velvet cushion, edged with cord of gold, upon which lay a superb clasp of diamonds, that, catching the rays of the lamp and reflecting them, seemed to eclipse it with their splendor.

'Its value is forty thousand crowns,' quietly answered David, as he placed it upon his work-bench. Upon the cushion by the side of the clasp, was a single diamond of great size unset, its place in the aigrette being indicated by a vacant cup.

'It must be the king's?' exclaimed the inquisitive and curious footman.

'It is his majesty's. Now let me look at the pearl thou wouldst have me match for thy master? Who is he?'

'Sir John Millicent,' answered the man, with a slight faltering and a quick coming color as if he were lying.

'I have done work for Sir John. Let me see the pearl. It is a fair one but not of much value,' he added, as he took it. 'I can match it. Is the master to go to France?'

'Yes, I think so.'

'I hope he will better his fortune. Methinks he gives his knaves rich liveries, for a poor knight as he is,' said David, as he glanced a second time at the handsome and showy attire of Markham; for it was none other than the confidential valet of Lord Bresseles come as a spy to the Goldsmith's house, and inventing an excuse for entering by means of an odd pearl, which his master had at one time given him for success in some enterprise similar to the present.'

'We dress as suits our fancy, rather than our master's purse,' answered Markham.

'This pearl hath once been an ear drop.'

'Thou hast hit it. If thou wilt find a fellow to it, my master would make both a present to thy fair daughter.'

'Tell Sir John my daughter hath no need to adorn herself with jewels, being full comely as he well knoweth. Nevertheless, from an old knight like him such a gift were pleasing; yet doubtless he is not able to give so much. This and its fellow would be

worth fifty pounds, if he pay me for the match.'

'Nay, he giveth thee this only for her, if thou couldst find a match for it.'

'Here is one that is twin with it. But I cannot take the present. I will give the mate to thy master, tell him, for twenty pounds. And if he desires both set as ear adornments, I will set them plain for five pounds more. As a gift I cannot take it, and say to him, with my thanks for his courtesy to my daughter.'

'But he bade me see the maiden, and tell her from him what I have told thee. Hath not the knight hired money of thee?'

'He hath often!'

'So he hath of every goldsmith in London in his time, if report saith true!'

'Dost thou speak so freely of thy master?'

'We are accustomed to,' answered Markham, who for a moment had forgotten his assumed character as a servant of Sir John Mellicent, whose name he had used, rightly guessing from the knight's character that he had had dealings with the goldsmith. With ready wit he had conceived, as he had ridden hither, after leaving his master, Bresseles, the ruse of the pearl and the idea of passing for Sir John's valet.

His object was to get access to the house, and ascertain if the maiden, as he felt pretty well convinced, were not in fact the goldsmith's daughter, rather than the brazier's. Nevertheless, though David had acknowledged that he had a daughter, he was resolved not to have him tell he had

seen her; and also taken a close survey of the house and noting its weak points, for in his own mind he was satisfied that if his lord resolved to have the maiden he would come and carry her off.

'If thou wilt let me at least give Sir John's words to her,' added Markham, adroitly, 'so long as thou wilt not let her accept his gift, by which he would show thee his gratitude for the service thou hast rendered him, I shall be content to return to him. Otherwise, he will break my head.'

'Ruth!'

'Master Goulbourne,' answered the maid, appearing at the door.

'Show this footman up stairs, and let him speak with Beatrice. He is Sir John Mellicent's man, and hath a message for her!'

'Come this way, young man,' said Ruth, with that air of disdain with which she seemed to comport herself towards all footmen save her own Spankie!

'When thou hast told her the words Sir John gave thee, come down again and I will send the other pearl to Sir John to see if he liketh my terms.'

'He will regret thy daughter hath not accepted his gift,' answered Markham, inwardly pleased that the pearl was declined; for although he knew his lavish lord would make up to him its loss in such a service, he still preferred keeping it in his own possession. Markham was one of those incomparable valets that run all bold risks to serve a generous and gold-free master.

When Markham reached the sitting-room and beheld Beatrice, who was sitting beneath a lamp with her rich

boddice in her lap, fastening upon it a loop that was not well secured, he started with surprise at her beauty, and involuntarily bowed with as much civility as if she had been a lady of the court.

Art thou the fair daughter of the goldsmith, or an angel?

'Nay, do not mock, sir. What is thy message?' she said with a dignity that abashed him.

'Sir John Mellicent, in consideration of certain favors extended to him by thy father, hath sent thee a present of a fair pearl; but thy father hath declined it for thee. Nevertheless, I feel it duty to make known to you Sir John's intentions.'

'I have heard of the knight, but do not know him, and my father is right in declining his gift. Say to your master I thank him for his great courtesy?' With these words she resumed her needle, while with his eyes he stood and admired her, till Ruth said sharply:

'Thou hast delivered thy errand, Sir Pert, and I will show thee down again.'

'Sir John will regret this refusal,' said Markham, lingering while he surveyed the room, doors and windows.

'I have no more to say,' answered Beatrice, without raising her eyes from the loop.

'She is as cool and cavalierly as a lady born,' muttered Markham, as he turned and descended the stairs.

'Thou hast a fair daughter, Master Goldsmith!' he said as he re-entered the shop. 'I wonder her fame hath not got abroad.'

'Speak of thy business only. What

wilt thou do about this match pearl?

'I will take back to Sir John his own, for I have no further orders.'

'Tell him I appreciate his kindness; but that he oweth me nothing nor I he! Our business has been matter of loan and interest, and no favor on either side. Indeed, I am not a little surprised at Sir John's sending such a message and present. If he were thirty years younger, I should suspect he had some underhand purpose in it! As it is give him my respectful duties and say that he can have the match pearl, if he wishes it, for twenty pounds!'

Thus David Goulbourne had an eye to trade, though he rejected the knight's gift.

Markham now took his leave, well content with his success thus far; and having got outside, he turned back the sleeves, and drew out the laced lappels, at once resuming the livery of his master, Lord Bresseles, which he had artfully disguised by displaying a fanciful one to the eyes of the goldsmith.

He found his horse at the next corner, and mounting him galloped away.

CHAPTER IV

THE goldsmith having dismissed the spy who had passed himself upon him so successful, as Sir John Mellicent's man, bolted his door and returning into his shop, sat down before the diamond clasp, to finish it in time for the king's messenger in the morning. He had arranged his light

to suit him, and taken his tools to begin his delicate work, when Beatrice entered, followed by Ruth.

'I have come, dear father, to say good-night before I retire!'

'God bless thee, my child,' said her father, kissing her with affection.

'You will not work late, sir?'

'Not above two hours!'

'How beautiful those diamonds are!'

'Yes; they are the best water I have ever seen! The center one is worth at the very least five thousand pounds, if set alone very richly. But why do you linger? What have you to say?'

'Father,' said Beatrice with some hesitation, 'I fear that you have been deceived to-night. Ruth insists that she saw this very man following the Lord Bresseles to-day, and also on other days!'

'Yes, master, I know that he is one of his men!' said Ruth, positively. 'I was trying to recollect where I had seen his face when he was here. But I now recollect. He is none of Sir John's men, not he! Sir John is too poor to pay such a gallant at his heels. Besides, as I said, I saw him in the retinue of Lord Bresseles to-day!'

'Are you sure of that?' demanded the goldsmith in surprise.

'Yes; I will take my oath of it!'

The goldsmith now recollected what his friend the Brazier had told him, how that Lord Bresseles had inquired who Beatrice was, and it at once occurred to him that he might have let one of his lordship's men in, instead of a man from Sir John.

'I would I had Jerry here! I would send him at once to Sir John, and know the truth of this. If he sent him not, then it accounts for this gift of the pearl, and excuses Sir John of a folly, and at the same time puts me on my guard against the arts of a very dangerous and powerful nobleman. Beatrice, this Lord Bresseles hath seen thee at the lattice, and, I doubt not, hath free thoughts with regard to thee! and this man hath been his spy. But I will see Sir John at once. I shall have time to find the clasp when I return.'

'Do not go, sir. I have no fears,' answered Ruth boldly. 'I will put on my cloak and hood and see him, and bring thee back an answer speedily.'

'That is a good girl. Stay. I will write a line to Sir John, and ask him to reply in writing.'

The note was brief and ran thus:

'Sir John Millicent will oblige David Goulbourne, by informing him whether he hath sent a footman to his shop to-night with a pearl, or whether he hath in his service a tall footman with a red mustache, and long light hair. David Goulbourne herewith sends his service to Sir John Millicent.'

'This by the maid Ruth, by whom send a reply in writing.'

In two minutes Ruth was ready, and taking a lantern in her hand, she sallied forth to the abode of Sir John.

She was naturally courageous, or she would not have dared to traverse

the streets of London by night; but her curiosity, and her zeal for her master and young mistress, gave her new resolution in their cause. She wanted also to confirm her own positive assertions to them.

But the door had not more than closed upon her, ere she felt a slight tremor of fear at having volunteered on this enterprise; but plucking up courage, she prepared to hasten forward, when a young man close by her side said diffidently:

'Mistress, is not this the house of David Goulbourne, the jeweller?'

Ruth would have hastened on without replying, lest he might prove an evil designer; but there was something in his voice so courteous and respectful, that she turned the lantern full upon his face to see if it corresponded to the peevish tones of his voice; for, provided he were a civil person, she saw no reason why she should not reply to his inquiry, stranger though he was, and night though it were. She saw at a glance that his face was pleasing, and kindly in its expression, and that there was nothing to fear from him. He was attired, too, in a coarse grey frock coat, bound with black cord, and wore plain blue cloth doublets without slashes, and upon his head the ordinary apprentices low crowned cap. This dress which bespoke him of the lower class of citizens and an apprentice, re-assured her; and although she would have fled from a strange lacquey or a rioting lord, who might have thus accosted her, she felt no fear of this young man.

'I will answer him coolly, for he

seems so modest and diffident,' said she to herself; 'For he can mean no harm; though were a nobleman to put such a question, I should begin to think of Miss Beatrice, and bid him go about his business. Dear me, what a pity it is in a tradesman's daughter to be handsome. I hope it'll never bring her to harm, although it is likely to cause her trouble. Spankie says I am handsome enough for him, and that is as handsome as a queen for me.'

'You do not answer me, good mistress,' said the apprentice, observing her silent, and still gazing upon him. 'I asked if this was not the goldsmith's abode?'

'Yes, truly. Dost thou not see the gilt ring, and silver chain above there?'

'There are other smith's in this row, and it being dark, I might mistake it. Indeed I was about to knock at the door when you came forth.'

'You seem fair spoken! May I ask you, Sir Prentice, who you wish to see? I am the maid of the house, and can tell you maybe what you wish to know. Be quick, for I am bound on an errand in a great hurry?'

'I hear that your master is in want of an apprentice in his craft.'

'Marry, well done. News flies apace. It is not two hours since he knew that he would have to get one. Comest thou for the place?'

'If I could be found worthy of it.'

'Modestly answered! Verily, it is true enough. My master will need an apprentice, for his rogue Jerry hath been impressed for the Duke's fleet. Is it thy trade?'

'It is my only trade, mistress.'

'Well, beshrew me. I like well thy appearance and speech, and if my master is to have a new apprentice, I see not why he may not take thee in, as well as another. Most of them are such drinking, swearing, ale-house haunting braggarts, that a decent house is too good for them. I would as lief see a bear in my kitchen, as one half of the London apprentices. Dost thou drink, or swear, or break the Lord's day?'

'Neither,' answered the youth, smiling.

'Then thou dost stand a fair chance of pleasing Master Gouldburne. Dost thou go to a conventicle?'

'Verily, yes.'

'Well, I cannot stand talking with thee. I have to go on an errand to Sir John Millicent's. It is of great importance, or I would not have come out to-night, be assured.'

'Give me thy lantern, good mistress, and tell me the errand thou art upon, and I will bear it to Sir John for thee, for there is a bonfire on the next street, and thou wilt meet rough fellows that will trouble thee to pass.'

'Shall I, or shall I not?' reflected Ruth. 'But it does not become me to be abroad to-night. He seems fair and honest, and speaks to me so civilly withal. I will not give him the note, but I will ask him to go with me as Jerry used to go with me. Master 'prentice, I cannot well trust thee, being a stranger; but if thou wilt accompany me to Sir John's and back again, I will speak a good word for thee to my master, when I return.'

'I thank thee. I will go and come back with thee, and on the way, per-

haps, thou wilt tell me something of thy master's humor.'

'That I will do. But, first, how hast thou heard that he wanted an apprentice? It hath never come to any man's knowledge, save, indeed, the brazier, whose shop we are now passing here. Dost thou know Master Roger, the brazier?'

'I heard it not from him,' answered the apprentice, as he walked on by her side as she hurried along, so directing her lantern that he had better light of it than herself; for Ruth had a kindly feeling in her bosom for the youth, and felt friendly and well disposed towards him, for his manners were modest and prepossessing, and he was more civil and polite than any apprentice she had before met with, they being noted mainly for their rough manners and discourteous bearing, especially towards females in the streets.

'Nay, then, come up! Who could have told thee but a witch?'

'I was at the ale-house when thy master's apprentice, Jerry——'

'Jerry?'

'Jerry it was. I was there when he was pressed, and he bade me come and get the place, for that his master would need one.'

'So thou dost frequent the ale-house, and art known to Jerry?' said Ruth, gravely. 'Neither of these recommend thee to me, nor will they be likely to my master.'

'It was by accident only,' answered the apprentice, with some confusion.

'I might be known to Jerry without being his comrade at all, and seeing a crowd about the tavern, curiosity

might lead me, you know, to go and see what was passing.'

'That is true. Did they chain Jerry when they took him off?'

'He seemed to go willingly enough.'

'I dare to say it! He loved the sea and always was wishing himself a sailor. Now, if thou canst show a good character, and comest to my master in Jerry's place, I hope thou hast no hankering for the sea in thee.'

'Not a bit. I love the land too well.'

'Then it may be you may get Jerry's place. But thou wilt have to bring a good character from thy last master. How is it thou art away from him?'

'I believe he did not want me any more.'

'That is very odd. Dear me, what a press of people, and such a noise and bright light!'

'It is a bonfire, burning in rejoicing for the taking of Tangier. You will find them a-light all over the city.'

'It is well you came with me.'

'I will see that no one insults you. We turn this way to Sir John Millicent's. He lives down there, close by, I believe.'

'Yes. How well you know about London! Come, let us hasten on. There are three apprentices coming after us.'

'They will not harm thee.'

'But they may thee. Come, let us walk faster.'

Ruth now fairly ran, for the persons she had alluded to now called out for them to stop. The young man could scarcely keep up with her, and the next moment she was at Sir John Millicent's door at the bottom of the

court. It was a shabby abode and dark. The three men stopped as if to watch and lay in wait. The apprentice rapped on the door, which was opened by a little old man with a rush light in his hand, that served to show his poor apparel.

'Please give this to Sir John and bring me an answer at once,' said Ruth, thrusting the paper into his hand.

'Sir John is a-bed.'

'Give it to him there.'

'It seems of importance by thy earnestness,' said the apprentice, as the old porter retired.

'It is; and if thou art our apprentice, I will tell thee some day about it. What is thy name? I forgot to ask it.'

'George Faithful.'

'It is a good one and pleases me, and will please my master if thou dost thyself. There wait those three men.'

'Fear them not.'

'We must pass them.'

'And will pass them!' responded the young man resolutely.

'Art thou good at single-stick?'

'I have played it ere now a little.'

'I will wait till they go away. They are three to one.'

'There is no danger. We will go as we came, and not heed them.'

'Sir John says he has no such fellow as the paper asks for,' answered the porter.

'Tell him to write it—to write it down.'

'He hath done so.'

'Let me see.'

'What, dost thou read, mistress?' asked the apprentice.

'I was taught by my young mistress. Yes, it is right, tell Sir John, and thank him! I knew it was all as I told master.'

'What was as you told him?' asked the apprentice.

'Not now. Let us go. But I for got the men. They still stand there.'

'Perhaps they wait for others. Let us go. I can defend both thee and myself, if it come to blows.'

'You speak like a brave apprentice. Jerry would never fight more than one, and run from two always, yet he ne'er came home but with a broken head. I would there were some other way of getting out of this court than this.'

'Put thy arm in mine. We will put a brave front and pass on.'

Ruth, finding he was resolute and feeling confidence in his courage, notwithstanding the odds, did as he bade her, and they passed up the close. She was so well aware of the lawless state of the streets, and had seen and heard so much of recontres in them, that she took it for granted that the new apprentice would be assailed. He seemed to believe so, too, for as they came up to the three fellows, he loosened a hanger that he wore beneath his frock and which she did not before discover, and said:

'If they press me release my arm and retreat a pace or two, and give me scope at the varlets!'

'Ho, villain, stand back and give up the wench hanging on thy arm and let us see if she be young or old,' cried one of the three, while the trio advanced with locked arms upon him.

'Clear the path, fellows, or you must take the consequences,' answer-

ed the apprentice, in a firm and even voice.

'Down with him. He dares to threaten us,' cried another, and they all three pressed upon him with their quarter staves.

'Now back a step, and throw the light of the lantern in their faces and blind them,' he said to Ruth in a low tone. 'Fear not, but that I will protect thee from the rogues.'

Ruth obeyed, and at the same moment the apprentice drawing his hanger set upon them with such good will and so took them by surprise that they gave back crying, 'The fellow hath a sword.'

'And you shall feel its edge, my masters,' he retorted as he cut at them with skill and vigor, and drove them up the close fairly at a run; for the London apprentices' being armed only with quarter staves and forbidden the use of steel under heavy penalties, seldom contended long in their frays where steel was drawn against him.

'We will have him arrested for using steel on an apprentice,' said one of them they gained the broader street and encouraged by the crowd around the bonfire, stopt his flight.

'Who used steel?' asked two or three butches near.

'The fellow there with the girl! We three set upon him and he drew steel and drove us.'

'Then you shall not press him further,' answered a stout brewer. 'If one can drive three he had earned the street and shall walk unmolested!'

'But it is against the King's laws for an apprentice to carry steel

weapons!' rejoined one of the discomfited party.

'That is the king's and his brave apprentice's look-out, not thine,' said a butcher.

The bullies seeing that, like all that fly the field, they were without favor, slunk away; and the bold 'prentice and Ruth, who had heard all that was said passed on their way without molestation.

'Now,' said Ruth, first speaking when they had got well towards home, if thou has not shown thyself as brave an apprentice this night as ever defended a woman, may I never see thee David Goulbourne's apprentice. But for thee I should have been in great peril! It shall not be my fault if my master doth not engage thee!

'If I have made you my friend I have not fought these rogues in vain!'

'You have made me your friend. Oh, I do love a brave man! Not that I am going to love you; because I am engaged to a nice young man, Mister Spankiel. Did you ever happen to hear of him?'

'I dare say! So you are to be married!'

'Why, not just now! We haven't got quite enough laid up yet to go to house-keeping, but we hope to in another year!'

'How much lacks?'

'Well, I have fifty crowns, three shillings and sixpence, and Spankie has fifty-two pounds sterling! I wish you could know Spankie, he is so clever; and when I tell him how brave you are, he will think so much

of you; for he thinks a great deal of courage. Dear me! how you did fight and they did run. When I tell master and Miss Beatrice——'

'Is that the name of your young mistress who taught you how to read?'

'Yes. She is so handsome, and good and virtuous! You don't know how many young lords ride by to look at her!'

'Indeed! Then she loves to be looked at by young lords?'

'Dear me, no. She is very diffident; but a girl can't alway keep in and have the lattice closed. She has flowers, too, on the balcony, and has to water them. But of late she keeps very close, she dislikes so to have them notice her.'

'Think you she has any lover either of high or low degree?'

'Dear no; as for lovers of high degree, her father would not let one of them speak to her, for he knows they would stoop, like the eagle, only to strike its victim, and she fears these young lords, as it is right and proper she should do. Her father is very wise and watches over her, for he loves her dear as life. He say she shall never marry any one who cannot take a watch to pieces and put it together again.'

'Has he said so?' demanded the youth with sudden surprise and earnestness of manner.

'Yes, a score or more of times. He means by it that she shall wed only in her degree, and a youth of his own craft. See, now what may happen!—who knows? Certainly if you had fought for Miss Beatrice to-night as

courageously as you did for me, you would have had her heart. Who knows what may be yet? I do hope you will take Jerry's place, and that master and Beatrice will like you as well as I do. I know I ought not to talk so free with a stranger, but somehow I feel as if I had known you for years.'

'I am very glad that I met you. No doubt I should have had difficulty in getting into favor with the goldsmith if I had not happily seen you coming out of his door.'

'How fortunate it was. But——'

'But what?'

'I said Miss Beatrice was heart free! but——'

'Is she not?'

'How eagerly you ask. There is a young nian whom she has seen but once that I know she feels a great interest in.'

'Who is he?'

'I don't know! nor does she! Dear me how inquisitive you are! But we are at the door already. You must come in with me.'

CHAPTER V

The young lord Bresseles was seated in his sumptuously furnished apartment wrapped in a gorgeous Persian gown, and his feet thrust into elegantly worked Indian slippers. He had a Turkish pipe in his hand, while from time to time he would place it in his lips and inhale the fragrant tobacco, the next moment to exhale it in blue clouds, that floated as lazily as his own thoughts about his head.

'Mungo!' he called in a low tone, as if it were an effort to speak as loud as he did; for he lolled upon his ottoman, the very personification of luxurious effeminacy, and of voluptuous indolence. He was rather handsome but free indulgence in pleasure, had greatly marred his good looks, and stamped upon his flushed face, an air of abandon. He was very rich, and the costly appearance of things about him, showed the lavishness of his purse.—He was in good favor with the king, whom he resembled too much in his licentiousness not to be liked by him.—Nature had gifted him with talents of a high order, but he had made them administer to his sensual indulgences. Lord Bresseles though scarcely six-and-twenty, kept a table, the best hunters and hounds in the kingdom, and even rivalled the monarch in his pleasures.

'Mungo!'

'Massa!' responded a negro boy about sixteen years of age, springing to his feet from an Angola rug at the side of the ottoman, where he had been dreaming of the palm-groves that shaded his father's cot in sandy Africa.—Lord Bresseles had purchased him at a great price, for he was a prince's son in his own land; and as it was just now getting to be greatly in fashion for noblemen to have at least one Ethiopian attendant, it was proper that the most voluptuous lord in the kingdom should obtain one with royal blood in his veins, as Mungo's certainly had; for his father had a guard of a thousand warriors and governed a tribe of eighty thousand people.

But a prince stronger than he had invaded his territories, and made his wives and children captive; and Mungo, after various adventures, became the body servant of Lord Bresseles. He was a faithful and good-tempered youth, as his pleasant countenance showed; still he was sad, for he sighed for his native groves, and remembered with tears his mother and father.

'What, massa!' he responded bowing before the noble, with his hands crossed upon his bosom, and in an attitude at once of submission and attention.

'Drop more incense into the bowl of my pipe.'

Mungo took a small silver box from a marble stand near the ottoman, and taking a pinch of a rich-looking powder from it, he held his fingers above the golden bowl of the chebouque, and dropped it upon the fiery contents. A cloud of fragrant odor ascended and soon filled the atmosphere of the room with the most exquisite perfume,

'Now take the pipe and bring me coffee.'

Mungo received the chebouque upon his bended knee, and laying it upon a table, placed before him in a gilt cup the oriental beverage, which at that age few but the rich could indulge in.

'Has not Markham come yet?' asked Lord Bresseles, as he slowly sipped his coffee with a gold spoon, with which he had added a spoonful of brandy to his cup.

'Me hear 'em hossy now!' responded Mungo quickly, his large black eyes brightening up as he bent his head for-

ward to listen. Lord Bresseles let his glance linger for a moment with a look of prideful vanity upon the fine leopard-like shape, ebony skin and brilliant eyes of his slave, and smiled within himself as he thought how desirous the king had been more than once to get possession of him; and in truth Mungo was the handsomest African ever seen in England. Lord Bresseles moreover dressed him in the richest apparel of blue silk, lined with scarlet and trimmed with gold braid, which, with an orange-colored Greek cap and tassal, set him off to the best advantage, and caused him to be the admiration of all the common people of London, whenever he accompanied his master forth.

'Go to the window, Mungo, and see if he has passed by or gone into the stables.'

'Him ride into de stable, massa.'

'It must be Markham then. I wonder what news he brings of the pretty little citizen? I am well assured that that villainous brazier was throwing me off the scent, by his readiness to acknowledge her to be his daughter, I read a lie in his eye while he was talking! Still it may be so;—but why should I see her at the goldsmith's in the evening when I returned, as well as in the morning. But Markham's wit will unravel it. There is his step! Go and admit him without waiting for him to rap,' said Lord Bresseles aloud to his slave.

The next moment the confidential valet of the young nobleman entered his apartment.

'Well, Markham, what news?' asked his lordship, rising half up, and regarding him eagerly

'The brazier, for some reason or other, deceived you, my lord. The maiden is the daughter of David the jeweller.'

'This you had ascertained without doubt?'

'I have, my lord : I have seen her and spoken with her.'

'You have been more successful than I hoped. How did you manage?'

'You recollect, my lord, the odd pearl you gave me about the affair of my lady St.—'

'Yes, yes—what of it?'

'It occurred to me I could make an errand with it in my hand to the goldsmith. So I made up a story in my head, and by means of it, not to enter into particulars, I got to see the jeweller and his daughter.'

'I wish to hear the particulars.'

The valet then related the occurrences as the reader is already informed of them ; and when Lord Bresselles heard him say how he had passed off for a footman of Sir John Millicent he laughed heartily.

And the maiden close to is as wondrously fair as she seemed to be from the street?'

'More so, my lord; she is handsomer than any maid-of-honor at court.'

'So she refused even a gift, had old Sir John Millicent sent her one even. I see I shall have to try other ways, then. How did she bespeak you in the interview?'

'With grace and accomplishment, my lord.'

'I hope the king hath not seen her; and lest he should light upon her, I

must be prompt. Can your wits help me, Markham?'

'There is one way, my lord.'

'Name it.'

'Watching for her when she goes to conventicle to-morrow, and catching her up and carrying her off.'

'To-morrow the train-bands will all be out and under arms, on account of this unexpected affair between the ambassadors. It would be a dangerous undertaking at such a time—we should be set upon by the rôgues and get the worst of it.'

'Wait till next conventicle, my lord.'

'A whole week? No, no! I must secure her at once, or the king will supplant me. Besides, she may not go to conventicle on the next Sunday.'

'These Puritans never miss a meeting, my lord, no more than you would a play.'

'A week is too long. Think again.'

'There is the old way of attacking the house by night, with half a dozen true men, well-armed, and taking her away by force.'

'This will hardly do. Do you know that the Parliament yesterday took his matter seriously up, on account of a petition, or some such thing, sent in to it from the citizens, which represented to his majesty that his subjects, especially in the town of London, had been repeatedly and grievously outraged by the lawless attacks of certain nobles and retainers about his court, to the injury of their goods and the dishonor of their families. Whereupon Parliament decided that it became necessary that his majesty

restrain such by his authority, or the perpetrators, whether noble or prince, should be tried at the bar of their country for these offences equally with the lowest commoner who might be guilty of them!

'It hits you, my lord'

'Yes, a little,' answered Lord Bresseles, with a laugh of contempt at the idea of any restraint upon his pleasures and vices.

'What said the king?'

'He gave the petition to my Lady Castlemaine, and, laughing, told her to make papelletes of it to curl her hair!'

'I thought as much. So, my lord, you won't attack the house?'

'Not just now; for, though the king treated the impertinent petition with proper derision, he afterwards privately said to me, that in order not to increase the hostility between the town and court, he would esteem it as a favor if I and other lords would take less open courses in carrying out our amusements.'

'Then we must think of some other way. Ah, I have it, my lord.'

'What do you devise, for your invention hath never failed?'

'I will give you my plan, my lord. But——' and here he glanced at Mungo.

'Can't he hear it even?' asked Lord Bresseles, laughing at his valet's cautious manner.

'No, my lord.'

'Go, Mungo. Wait in the ante-room.'

The slave left the room, and Markham, going to the door to see that it was closed tight, returned and laid before his master the projects he had

conceived, but which we will not here unfold, leaving it to be revealed in the progress of the story.

We now return to Ruth and the young apprentice whom we left just about to enter the abode of David Gouldbourne. At the loud and well-known rap of Ruth upon the panel, the goldsmith, who was at work upon the diamond clasp, rose and hastened to let her in; for, as he sat at his bench and thought over the circumstances of the visit of the footman and recalled all the events of the day, he could not remove from his mind an impression of uneasiness touching his daughter's safety and peace. He, therefore, upon hearing Ruth's knock, hastened to open the door to ascertain the result of her visit to Sir John Millicent's.

Upon seeing her accompanied by a tall, well-shaped young man, the goldsmith looked surprised, but his appearance was at once explained by Ruth, who said quickly:

'This, master, is a brave young man, who fought three stout apprentices and drove them away, when they would have insulted me. He has accompanied me home.'

'He is welcome!' said David, looking at him closely by the light which Ruth's lantern cast upon his face. 'I see by your badge that you are a goldsmith's apprentice.'

'Yes, sir,' answered the young man, respectfully.

'May I ask him in, sir? He seems a very modest and proper young man, though he is an apprentice, sir,' whispered Ruth. 'Perhaps he may do to take Jerry's place, if he suits you; for he says his master has given

up business and gone to Flanders, or some foreign place over sea, and hath given him up his 'dentures.'

'Walk in, young man; I will talk with thee,' said David.

Ruth looked at him and smiled, as if she felt greatly pleased at her success thus far; and, tripping in, she was hurrying upstairs to inform Beatrice of her adventures, when David called to her somewhat sternly:

'Ruth, hadst thou no errand from me? What bringest thou from Sir John? Step in, young man, and let me close the door—that is, if thou hast a desire to take service with me after I converse with thee.'

'I am out of service now, sir.'

'Very well; stand there in the entry till I am at leisure,' answered the goldsmith, who felt quite prepossessed in the young man's favor, not only from his agreeable countenance and neat appearance, but also on account of his courage in defending Ruth. 'What said Sir John?'

'He has written his answer there, sir,' she responded, placing the note in his hand.

It ran thus:

'GOOD MASTER GOULDBOURNE:

'I have read what you have writ, and I answer that I am not so lucky a knight as to have footmen tall or short, with or without beard; and for pearls, gad zounds! I have forgot the look o' them, it hath been so long since I last saw one. If any one hath been to thee, calling himself my man, he is a rogue and hath imposed upon thee. I give thee my friendly salutation.

'JOHN MILLICENT, Bart.'

When the goldsmith had finished reading this reply of the knight, he stood silently gazing upon the paper, and knitting his brows with anxiety.

'He says truly, I have been deceived. There is treachery under all this, which I must watch against. Verily, a man who hath a fair daughter in these times hath more robbers to guard against than he who hoards up gold.

'Thou hast well done thine errand, Ruth; and I thank, for thee, this young man for his service to you, and in seeing you off safely. Go now to Beatrice, and give her this note from Sir John, so that she may see we have an enemy somewhere, seeking to do us a mischief. The footman that came here was a spy—doubtless the minion of some profligate lord. Come, young man, follow me into my shop.'

The apprentice, who had stood aside in the little entry at the foot of the stairs, while David Gouldbourne read the note, attentively listening and noting with deep interest whatever passed, now went after him into his work-room. The first object that struck his eyes was the glittering clasp of diamonds, which lay upon the velvet-cushion just under the shade lamp, by the light of which the goldsmith had been at work upon it—He looked at it with surprise, and then around the room with curiosity, apparently surveying with care each object in the shop.

The goldsmith seated himself, and then turning to the apprentice, who now respectfully doffed his cap and stood before him with it in his hand, he regarded his face a moment with a steady gaze.

The young man colored and dropped his eyes, and with his dark, rich brown locks upon his temples, looked so handsome, that David shook his head and murmured——

'He is too good-looking. He will be unsteady and roving. Nevertheless, he hath a good face, and I will at least question him! So what is thy name?'

'George Faithful.'

'A very good and upright name, my young man. If thou art as good as thy name, thou wilt serve me well.'

'I trust I shall be diligent in my duty. I will do the best I can.'

'Well spoken. What is thy age; for, methinks, thou art pretty well advanced in thy apprenticeship.'

'I am twenty, sir.'

'I should think thee a year or two more. But twenty will give thee but one year to serve me. I shall then have to pay thee journeyman's wages. I had an idle varlet who has been impressed to-day, but I am well rid of him. He was eighteen and had three years to serve. But if thou art diligent and steady, thy one year might be worth his three. How is it thou art without a master? This does not speak well for thee!'

'My master, sir,' answered the young man, deeply coloring, and hesitating as he spoke, was included in the proscribed covenanters, and he is fled into France.'

'Who was he?'

'Perhaps thou hast heard, sir, of Thomas Alloyul'

'Verily, have I. So thou art one of his apprentices. He has, however,

been gone ever since the King came in, and that is a year nearly. What hast thou been doing since?'

'I have been getting what jewelery to do as I could work at, sir, assisting one and another.'

'A bad way of getting along. It tempts to idle habits, and leads to taverns and cock-pits. I dare say to-night that when thou sawest my maid insulted, thou wert loitering about in the streets, and so chanced to be at hand to do her this good service?'

'No, sir. I knew your apprentice had been pressed, and was coming to your door to offer myself to you, to serve out my time in his place when I met her.'

'So you were coming hither. How heard you of my loss?'

'I saw your young man taken by the Duke's seamen.'

'Well I will try thee, for I need an assistant, for I have much work on hand. I will give thee a trial; and as I know thee not, and thou bringest me no written character, I must watch thee very closely, and guard my goods. If you will, therefore, take service with me on these conditions, that I am to keep you in the shop by day under lock and key when you are at work, and also lock you in your sleeping room by night, you shall have a place with me. If I find at the year's end you are faithful and skillfull, and will be of use to me, I will give you journeyman's wages, and retain thee in my employ.'

'I accept the conditions, sir,' replied the young man cheerfully.

'But first let me test thy skill in my craft. All apprentices are not

workmen. Some go through the years of their services little better than they began, while I have seen others who in two years made themselves masters of their trade. I have a peculiar mode of testing apprentices.'

'What is it, sir?' asked the young man, with a faltering eye and a confused manner.

'To take a Geneva watch, that I keep my time by, to pieces and put it together again. The man that can do this is a skilful artizan; for in the parts of a watch is comprised and embraced every variety of our craft, even to setting of jewels. If thou can'st do this I can trust thee in all manner of work; as it will prove to me that you perfectly know your business. Here is the watch.'

The goldsmith took from a little cabinet a very large and costly watch set with jewels, and, presenting it to him, said,

'You will take out and reset one of the jewels on the face, besides the other work of taking apart and putting together. Here is a lamp that will last thee till midnight, three hours from now! There is a settee on which, when thy work is done, thou canst sleep the residue of the night. In the morning I will come down and unlock the door and see if thou hast performed thy task. If well, thou shalt serve me. If ill, I will let thee go as thou camest.'

With these words the goldsmith took up the diamond clasp, which he had completed, and examining each of his drawers to see if all were secure, he bade good night to the young candidate for apprenticeship, and car-

rying the clasp out with him in its case, that he might have it ready to send by the king's messenger, however early he might come for it, he locked his door and barred it as usual when he retired from his shop at night.

The young man, thus locked in with the jewels as securely as they were, listened to the retiring steps of the goldsmith as he ascended the stairs till they were heard in the room above him. He then walked to the door to see if indeed he were fairly locked up to his task; then going to the work-bench he took the watch in his hand and gazing on it with a look of mute despair, said,

'On this glittering bauble hangs my fate and all my hopes! Yet the veriest hind that knows his mysterious craft would succeed where I am impotent. What an ordeal I have submitted to. I might as easily take Westminster Abbey to pieces and put it together again as this watch. But I will look at it.'

CHAPTER VI.

'Miss Beatrice,' said Ruth, on entering the sleeping room of the goldsmith's fair daughter, after having left the young apprentice down stairs at the door with her master, 'who do you think has come home with me?'

Beatrice had just proposed to put up her hair previous to retiring, and being in an inner room did not overhear what passed at the street door, and supposing that Ruth had come in alone she looked with surprise at her

question, when seeing how elated and happy she looked, she smiled and said, quietly.

'Spankie !

'Spankie ! Dear, no ! You could never guess !

'Then I will not try, Ruth ! What paper is that in your hand ?

'It is the note Sir John wrote !

'And what did he say ?' she asked quickly.

'That he has no such knave as the rogue that came here. I knew it was one of Lord Bresseles impudent fellows. There is Sir John's hand.'

Beatrice read it with a heightened colour, and then said, half aloud,

'This is singular ! What could have been his object in coming here ?

'Why you see, as I told you, Lord Bresseles saw you and the way he regarded you and kissed his hand to you, showed me that he would not forget you !

'But what interest can Lord Bresseles have in me, Ruth ?

'Dear me, how simple, begging your pardon, Miss Beatrice. He sent this man of his here to spy and see what could be done !

'What does he wish ?

'Why, to tell you plainly, to run away with you !

'I do not fear him, Ruth !' she said, colouring and smiling.

'I would not trust to him. These young nobles, now-a-days, are worse than robbers ! I advise you to keep on your guard, Miss Beatrice, or you may find yourself spirited away down to some great castle in the country before you know it. You recollect the pretty Mary Neville, the haberdasher's niece, who was caught up from

her own door where she was standing, by two horsemen, and they galloped off with her ;—and—'

'I do not fear her fate, Ruth : for I shall be careful, if I must, not to stand in the door when horsemen go by especially one of Lord Bresseles !

'You laugh ; but you this morning said you disliked his looks and bold conduct so.'

'And so I do. But he will not and dare not contemplate any such outrage as you speak of. I can at least stay at home. But it does not become a virtuous and humble maiden to shut herself up for fear of young lords. Her innocence and modesty will be a sufficient protection. Who is this that has come home with you ?

'I am glad you have curiosity enough to think to ask again,' answered Ruth, a little touched because her young mistress did not see fit to be as much ashamed at the admiration of Lord Bresseles for her, as she was herself. 'It was a young man.'

'A young man ! What will Spankie say ?

'Spankie will like him and thank him too, when he hears what I have to tell him.'

'Why, indeed. What has happened—who is he ?

'His name he says is George Faithful, a very good sort of a name, certainly.'

'But that does not infer that the bearer of it is a good sort of a person.'

'He is, and you will say so when you see him ! But I will tell you all about it !

'Do ; for I see you have some great news or other at your tongue's end.'

'You know I *would* go and take master's note to Sir John Millicent, though you both said how perilous it was, (and so it was too,) for a female to be abroad after dark.'

'Yes, and I have been very anxious about you, Ruth.'

'I knew you would be, and so I took the young apprentice with me.'

'But as I did not know of your having a young gallant with you, it could not lessen my anxiety.'

'That is true. But I will tell you how it was. Soon as I got out of the door and master had shut it, and I had hardly taken three steps away from it, when a respectful, pleasant-toned, civil spoken young man stopped me politely and asked me if the door I came out of was that of Mister Goulbourne, the jeweller? I wouldn't have stopped to speak or answer any man in the street, and in the night, too, and didn't like to answer him, but felt more like running forward, but there was something so civil and diffident-like in his manner, and his face as I turned the lantern full on it looked so—so—so—*amicable*, that I answered him.'

You could do no less—as he was so civil-spoken. But I begin to fear Spankie has a rival.'

'Not he. The young man then said he was fortunate to meet me, if I belonged here, as he understood my master wanted an apprentice. I told him he did.'

'Was he an apprentice then?'

'Yes, but the finest looking London 'prentice, maiden ever laid eyes on.'

'Really, you excite my curiosity, Ruth,' said Beatrice smiling.

'You'll see him, for he's down

stairs; I then told him that we did want one; and then he asked me where I was going so late, alone, for, if I would permit him, he would accompany me, and protect me, and on his return go in and see Mister Goulbourne about the place.'

'And so you gave your permission?'

'Yes, Miss Beatrice, especially after he told me that they had a bon-fire at the head of Thread-needle street, which I had to pass to go to Sir John's.'

'And he went with you?'

'Yes.'

'It was very inconsiderate in you, Ruth, a perfect stranger, too, as he was.'

'But he was so gentle—polite.'

'Well, I dare say he quite won your heart. Poor Spankie. I see there is no hope for him.'

'Don't fear for Spankie, Miss Beatrice. I am not in love with the apprentice; even though he did fight so brave.'

'Fight?'

'Indeed, I wish you could have seen it. You must know after we got by the bon-fire, three stout knaves with quarter-staves came after us, and called insultingly. He didn't seem to mind 'em and we got to Sir John's steps. After we left there they met us and told him to resign me.'

'You were in peril, indeed, Ruth,' said Beatrice with emotion.

'You would have thought so, had you seen and heard them. He bade them let him pass with me, or abide the consequences. They laughed at him, and set upon him all three. He

dropped my arm, drew a hanger, and advanced so bravely and fiercely upon them, hacking this and that with such right good will that they took to their heels.'

'Is this so?'

'Truth it is! If it had not been for him, I had not been here. I never saw a man more braver or wield a sword better. And so he come home with me; and if you are glad to see me you must thank him!'

'Indeed he deserves it! Where is he?'

'With thy father down in the shop!'

'I should like to see him!'

'You will if master engages him!'

'No doubt he will if he is skilful and of good character. For he must have someone to supply Jerry's place, or I must assist him as I have often done before!'

'Yes, he has often said you were as skilful an apprentice as he would wish to have! I do hope he will reward the young man's courage by taking him into his service!'

'So do I if he prove worthy!'

'He must prove worthy! Indeed, his face speaks for him.'

'Is he young?'

'Twenty he said; but he is tall and looks older; but to be an apprentice he must be under twenty-one you know.'

'Is he well favored?'

'The comeliest apprentice in London. And he is so modest and diffident. He isn't one of your swaggering quarter-staff bullies that others are!'

'Yet it seems he can fight to purpose.'

'Yes; and when I told him he fought too well to be over peaceable, he laughed, and said he had practised merely for amusement, and to defend himself if need were.'

'He had a sword you said! I thought there was a heavy fine against apprentices bearing weapons of steel!'

'So there is. But he kept his hid beneath his coat, till he had to use it against these three fellows.'

'I hope he will not be fined or troubled about it, if it should get abroad,' said Beatrice.

'He says he will be cautious hereafter. I do hope master will take him.'

'You seem to very greatly interested that he should. I fear a little for Spankie yet.'

'Well, we shall see who loves him,' answered Ruth, significantly.

'Love who?'

'The new apprentice.'

'What do you mean? There is a secret about this young man's coming here I am sure. What more have you to tell?'

'I won't tell it now, but wait; because, perhaps, there may be no need of telling you at all.'

'How mysteriously you look and talk. Explain to me at once, Ruth, what more you know.'

'I will to-morrow if—But there comes master up stairs. Hush he locks the door and bars it. The apprentice will then come up stairs and you will see him; for I am sure he has not let him out.'

Mr Goulbourne the next moment appeared in the room alone, and seeing Beatrice still up, he said;

'So Ruth has been telling you about her adventure, I dare say. It was not proper for her to go out so late. It seems a young man rescued her from the hands of some ill-disposed fellows.'

'She has told me so, sir, and feels so grateful to him, that she is anxious that you should take him into your employ; for I learn from her he is a jeweller.'

'That may be as it turns out. He seems to be a very respectable and modest looking young man, and may make a good workman. I have put him to the test to-night; and the result will show. I can have no bungler to work for me, with the delicate jobs I have on hand. There is the king's clasp which I have at length finished; and I will lock it in this cabinet of yours, Beatrice, until morning, when the king's messenger will probably be here early for it.'

Thus speaking, he placed it with its gilded case in the desk, and locking it put the key in his pocket.

'So it was not Sir John's man after all, father,' remarked Beatrice, as her father threw himself into his arm chair to rest a little while before retiring.

'No; Sir John's note is explicit. It was a spy of this Lord Bresseles without doubt; and I enjoin you, my daughter, to keep as much within as possible, and give no occasion for this lawless admiration of young lords. You are too far beneath them in rank to be regarded as a suitable person for an honorable alliance, and any other regard from them dishonors

both you and me. Keep out of their sight.'

'I will obey you, sir.'

'I would that I could marry you to some honest artisan of your degree, who would be a kind husband, and an honorable protection. But, methinks, you are very insensible to the admiration of such young men as have from time to time visited you. There is young Kenning, whose father is a rich armorer, and who will inherit his father's business as well as his money; I think he hath looked towards you.'

'He has no idea, father, beyond money. He is ignorant and coarse in his manners, and would marry me, as he would any other maiden, because his father bade him. I like him not.'

'There is Paul Povey, the brewer's eldest son, he has just set up in business. I know that he hath an eye to thee.'

'An eye to thy money, master, rather,' said Ruth, pertly. 'He looks only to the pounds Miss Beatrice may bring to him.'

'Well what do you think of George Stebbs, Beatrice?'

'There is another dull head,' spoke up Ruth. 'He would try and marry Miss Beatrice because she is so handsome, and that he might strut to court with her on his arm, and see the young men envy. He don't know whether she is pretty or ugly; but has heard folks say so, and so would wed her. To marry Beatrice to him, would be throwing pearls upon swine.'

'Hist. You should never quote

the Scriptures in common parlance, girl,' said David, grave y. 'Beatrice, if thou hast any favor towards any one, let me know it, and I will see his parents, and settle the match, if I approve it; for it is time I had a husband for thee. Thou art—I say it not to flatter thee—thou art too comely to remain unwedded in times like these we are upon.'

'I know of no one, sir, that I have any preference for,' answered Beatrice, blushing and casting down her eyes, as became a maiden to whom such a question had been so directly put.

'Then thou must keep much within, and not give occasion to these loose lived lords to mark thee. The old gossip-woman who sells the rush-lights opposite, told me as I came in from the brazier's, that she had seen Lord Bresseles kiss his hand to thee; and says she, "Take heed, Master David, of thy pretty bird, and not let it put its head out of its cage, or some hawk will pounce upon it." The woman gave me good caution, if thou lettest young nobles salute thee openly.'

'I am innocent, sir, of any blame,' answered Beatrice, looking deeply hurt, 'I was watering my flowers and merely looking up, when he saluted me, as the woman says. But I did not look a second time, but came directly in.'

'Thy flowers must be taken in, and kept otherwheres. So must thy eages; for on Monday morning I'll have the balcony railed up effectually.'

'You ought not to blame Miss Bea-

trice, sir,' answered Ruth, warmly. 'She could not help it. No maiden could be more discreet than she has been.'

'Well, well, I dare say. I do not blame, thee child; only their needs caution for the future.'

'If you engage this young apprentice, sir, he is so brave, and fights so valiantly, that we need not fear so long as he is here,' said Ruth.

'There is something in having a stout apprentice to help to protect one's house; but I like not one who braves the law, and carries steel, as this one seemeth to have done.'

'But if he had not steel, sir, he would hardly have beaten off the three quarter-staves,' said Ruth.

'I will see what his skill is, and then decide whether he remain or not. I have left him locked up in the workshop, and given him my Genoa musical watch, to take to pieces, and put together again.'

'He was willing, then, to try it?' said Beatrice.

'Yes. He made no objection, nor could he, as it was a fair test of his qualification. I placed it in his hands, and gave him till midnight to do it, for after that, being the lord's day, he may not work, and I forbade him. In the morning I shall look in upon him.'

'But how will you know, sir,' said Ruth, 'if he presents the watch to you entire, that he has touched it at all.'

'By the tune which the musical box in it will play. It plays one tune before it is taken to pieces, and quite another after it is put together again,

as Beatrice well knows. I ascertain the truth of this assertion by touching a spring. So you perceive, were he so inclined, he cannot deceive me.'

'But he looks like an honorable young man,' said Ruth.

'Yes he does indeed. I am prepossessed in his favor; and trust he will prove himself a good workman upon this trial.'

'If he does, sir, shall you keep him?'

'Yes.'

'Well, then I am fortunate in having been so lucky as to have fallen in with him,' said Ruth, with much apparent satisfaction.

'I tell Ruth, father,' said Beatrice, smiling, 'that I think Spankie has good cause for jealousy. You have no idea how eloquent she is in praise of the new apprentice, not only for his courage, which, to me, she extolled to the skies, but even of his personal appearance. I think Spankie had best be informed at once of the danger he is in.'

The goldsmith laughed and said, as he glanced at Ruth, whose rosy plump cheeks, were rosier than ever.

'I fear that if I engage him, and Spankie and he come together, there will be war.'

'I'll answer for it there won't be!' responded Ruth, very positively. 'Spankie loves me too well to be jealous, even if there was cause.'

'I have no doubt he does, Ruth,' answered the goldsmith. 'But let

this pass. If the youth acquits himself well, I will retain him; if not, I shall dismiss him. I did not ask him if he went to conventicle.'

'I did, sir,' answered Ruth, 'and he told me certainly he did.'

'Then there is an objection removed! I could have no Romish apprentice in my house! It waxes late. Give me my candle, Beatrice, and I will go to bed! Dost thou know that Steadfast Strong holdeth forth at conventicle to-morrow! We must be up betimes to hear him. A good night to thee, daughter. Go at once to bed, thou and Ruth, and let the house be quiet. The young man will be disturbed by any noise, if he is like me, when at work at night. It would take me an hour to do what I have given him three to do it in. Let all be quiet as soon as I close my door.'

'Good night, dear father,' answered Beatrice, and the goldsmith leaving her apartment, went into his own room on the right of the little sitting-room, and closed the door.

Beatrice bade Ruth to shut her own, first seeing that the door at the stair-head was secured; and in a few moments the whole house was still—save a low buzzing of voices heard within the maiden's apartment after the door was shut.

What their conversation was, and what it led to, shall be detailed in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE house of the goldsmith, as we have said, became still, and Beatrice with her maid retired within her own apartment. The latter, after listening to be sure that there was no movement in her master's chamber, said mysteriously:

'Miss Beatrice, I have a secret to tell you.'

'You are never without some mystery or other, Ruth. But what now? for I have seen you had something on your mind you couldn't keep long.'

'It is about this young apprentice.'

'Ah, you are still thinking upon him, I see,' said Beatrice, smiling archly. 'There is no kind of hope left for poor Spankie, that is very clear.'

"You may joke, Miss Beatrice, but it will, maybe, come very true by and by. I am half a mind not to tell you."

'Now don't keep the secret, Ruth; don't resolve so desperately, or you will not sleep a wink to-night. But what is it, seriously, that you have to reveal?' asked Beatrice, whose curiosity was getting to be excited by the words and manner of her attendant.

'It is about this young gentleman.'

'What young gentleman?'

'The new apprentice, I mean.'

'Really, this is the first time I ever knew that an apprentice was called a young gentleman?'

'You seem to be very gay, to-night, Miss Beatrice. One would think you knew.'

'Knew what? Certainly, you are as mysterious as a witch fortune-teller. Out with it and let me know.'

'Well, it is my opinion that this young man is no more a goldsmith's apprentice than you are, Miss Beatrice.'

'I am one, as my father says,' she answered, laughing. 'But why do you suspect so?'

His skin is as fair as a lord's, and his hands as white as a lady's.

'Did you notice this?' asked Beatrice, with some surprise.

'Indeed, I could not help it; and if master had not been made so near-sighted with working on such fine things as he does, he would have noticed his hands too.'

'He may have been ill, and is pale and thin.'

'He ill? I would like to see an ill man put to flight three quarter-staves. He is strong and full of health; but it is not the robust, brown health of a London apprentice, but the genteel, healthy look of the nobility. He never was an apprentice—not he.'

'Then what is he? How came he to say so?'

'Can't you see, Miss Beatrice?'

'Indeed, I cannot.'

'Then I will tell you. He is a young gentleman who has disguised himself to get into the house to be near you.'

'Disguised? A young gentleman disguised?'

'There is no doubt of it. I know it.'

'You alarm me, Ruth. I hope and pray it is not. What would my father do, or what would become of him if

he were discovered? But this is all your imagination.'

'It is not, but it is the truth. If ever there was a young gentleman, he is one. I should like to see him take the master's Geneva watch to pieces and put it together.'

'And don't you think him an apprentice at all?' exclaimed Beatrice, looking both alarmed and amazed.

'Indeed I don't,' responded Ruth, with emphasis.

'Who, then, is he?'

'He told me his name was George Faithful.'

'That does not explain who he is.'

'But it says *what* he is, though. He means by giving that name to show that he is faithful.'

'Then it is not his own name, you think?'

'I am sure it isn't, and yet I can't say. This I know and believe: that he is a good, modest, handsome young gentleman, who has seen you somewhere, and loves you, and has come here under the name and dress of an apprentice, to try and see you often and win your heart. Now you have my opinion.'

'Loves me?'

'Yes, that you may be sure of. He talked with me about you, and in such a way that I guessed at the state of his heart at once.'

'You have no right to guess at such things, Ruth. You must be mistaken. I know of no young man who loves me or thinks of me, that answers your description of handsome, noble, modest and brave. Not I. If I did, my father might have his anxiety touching me greatly relieved. I

should like to see the young man, or young gentleman, as you call him, and judge for myself.'

'You can see him.'

'How?'

'By going down into the shop, where the poor young man is, no doubt, in perfect despair at the task that is set before him. No doubt he thought he could come and go to work and learn by degrees. But in the very outset see what my master has set him to do. He will certainly fail as I stand here, for he is no jeweller, that I know.'

'Did he tell you so?'

'No. But—'

'But what?'

'Will you go down and see him?' she asked quickly, as if to avoid the reply.

"By no means. Besides, my father has the key."

'I can get it when he is asleep.'

'Not for the world! Besides, it would be so improper to go down.'

'Are you determined?' asked Ruth with a searching look, and speaking in an impressive manner.

'Yes. I cannot think of such a thing as you propose even though it were possible to get the key. If the young man is really an apprentice, as I cannot but think he is, he will be engaged in performing his task, and will be surprised at our visiting him in such a manner and at such an hour. He will think very meanly of his master's daughter. If he is not one, and a spy, we ought less to think of going near him.'

'Then you are resolved?'

'Firmly.'

'It would be so safe to have him in the house, apprentice or spy, to be a protection against any miscreant young lords coming about, he is so brave and fights so well. I said so to him myself as we walked along.'

'Y u was very familiar to tell him so.'

'I was telling him all about Lord Bres-eles' man and the pearl, as we came from Sir John's for he asked me so often what my errand was I could not help telling him, he seemed so interested to know. And so when he expressed his indignation about it, I told him I hoped, if he came to live with us, he would protect you.'

'And what said he?'

'With his life!'

'Really, I have a curiosity to see one who, on such brief acquaintance, has so won your heart, Ruth!'

'Then let me get the key, for I want you to see him!'

'No, no!'

'You *must* see him! I have my reasons for wishing you to see him!'

'I do not wish you to urge me, Ruth. Let him remain where he is. The morning will test whether he be 'prentice or pretender.'

Ruth walked up and down the room with a troubled look, and appearing much disappointed and disconcerted.

'If I could do it! If I *only* knew how—' she murmured.

'What is the matter, Ruth? Forsooth this young man has turned your little head. Spankie's fate is sealed without hope, I see!'

'No, it is not!' answered Ruth, resolutely. 'Miss Beatrice, I will

have to tell you! I wanted you first to see him and——'

'Don't ask me again. Take my boddice and hang it upon the brass nob of the rack. It is time I retired!'

Ruth hanging up the garment as she was ordered to do, came back to her young mistress and, banishing her discontent with a smile, said playfully,

'Suppose this apprentice were the handsome young man in scarlet silk coat and gold braid, you saw so intently regarding you this morning, and who stole your heart away in two minutes so that you will never get it again till you ask him for it!'

'What do you mean, Ruth?' asked Beatrice, blushing like the morning between surprise and pleasure, and fixing her dark eyes upon her maid with earnest inquiry.

'I mean what I say, Miss Beatrice. Suppose that the young man you saw should have taken it into his head from love for you, to assume the disguise of an apprentice in order to be near you, and offer himself to serve your father.'

'Such a thing is not possible!'

'Yes, it is; and suppose that your father should look up and give him his terrible Geneva watch to take to pieces and put together again, in order to test his skill who never took a watch in his hand but to see the time o' day by it?—and suppose he passes a long night in despair of performing a task which his love for you has brought upon him, and in the morning your father, finding he has not done it, discovers he is a pretender, and perhaps going farther, casts him

into prison, on the plea of an attempt to ascertain where he kept his jewels in order that he might rob him! And all this for his love for you!

'But, Ruth, this is all an imaginary case!'

'No, it is not; and now you shall have my secret. The young apprentice is none other than the handsome youth in the scarlet lined cloak. I kept it from you, wanting you to see him and make the discovery yourself!'

'Ruth, Ruth, are you certain that what you tell me is true?' cried Beatrice with emotion, her cheek paling and flushing by turns as she waited her reply.

'Yes. I knew him from the very first. But I did not let him suspect that I was aware he was not an apprentice. Disguised as he was in his coarse grey frock and prentice's cap. I recognised him. That was the reason I let him accompany me so readily for I wanted to find out all about him.'

'And did you find out who he was?' asked Beatrice, who evidently became deeply interested in the narrative given by Ruth.

'No, only that he was called George Faithful as he said. He told me nothing; and I did not like to be too curious lest he should take alarm and not come home again to the house. But one thing is certain it is the same young gentleman you saw, and who has been in your thoughts ever since.'

'I am very sorry if it should prove so, Ruth,' said Beatrice, with lively solicitude. 'He has been very imprudent!'

'That may be. But it was because he loved you.'

Beatrice looked beautifully confused at this frank assertion of her maid's, and after a moment's reflection said:

'What can be done? My father will be very angry, and, as you say, visit his deception with severity, if not imprison him; for if he is the person you think he is, he is no apprentice.'

'Of that you may be sure, Miss Beatrice.'

'Ruth, I am very much distressed about this. I hardly know how to act. One false step might be fatal to me. I confess to you that if he is the same person I saw, I am more deeply interested in him and his fate than I dare to confess to myself, or would confess to you, save at such a time. Something must be done to relieve him from the difficulty in which he has so imprudently placed himself. Yet it must be done so that my fair name shall not have a shadow cast upon it.'

'Will you take my advice, Miss Beatrice?'

'Let me hear it.'

'Give me leave to get the key of the work-room, and go down and see him and tell him plainly that he is discovered and that if he will give an honest account of himself we will help him out of the net he has been caught in.'

'Nay, it is possible he may be able to execute the task imposed upon him. If he deliberately offered himself to my father as an apprentice, he no doubt practised somewhat before-

hand the craft he was to give himself to.'

'He could never have imagined that the first thing he would be called upon to do, would be to dissect and make up again a Geneva watch. At all events it would not be proper, after what he has risked for you, for us to leave him to his fate.'

'But suppose he understands his task and we find it is nearly accomplished.'

'Then there is no harm done. He will then be permitted to stay, and you can see him every day.'

'That would be very improper, Ruth. It would be wrong to keep such a secret from my father.'

'How do you know but the young gentleman may be every way worthy of you? In that case you will not have done wrong; for then you can tell all to your father, and a happy wedding will crown all with rejoicing.'

What a wild tongue you have got, Ruth. I hardly know what step to take. I never was more perplexed in my life. If he knows nothing of his task he will be detected and I know not what my father will do.'

'And his suspicions already roused on account of this man of Lord Bresseles coming here in disguise. A second deception would make him so enraged, that I wouldn't answer for the young man's safety, not I.'

'I am perplexed. Duty to my father, and a desire to save one who has, perhaps, placed himself in danger on my account, both appeal to my heart.'

'Your father gains nor loses nothing,

by being kept in ignorance, while the young man may lose his life'

'Have you any idea who he is?'

'Not the least! Only that he is of gentle birth. That is clear.'

'He must not suffer for his imprudence. Can you get the key without waking my father?'

'I will try. He always lays it on the stand at the head of his bed with the spectacles and snuff-box.'

'And if you get it what can you say to the young man when you go down?'

'Tell him plainly he is discovered—'

'That is if you find he has yet done nothing to the watch.'

'Yes. I shall then ask him who he is?'

'Do not be rudely inquisitive. You had best let him out and tell him not to run such risks more.'

'How shall we account to your father if we let him out. No, no?'

'I did not think of that.'

'The only way to do is for you to help him with the watch yourself, and let him remain an apprentice.'

'I help him with the watch?'

'You will have to do it. The watch must be done to save appearances; and if it is done, the young man can stay. If it is not done, of course it will be clear to master he knows nothing of the business and is a pretender.'

'I wish I had never seen him, or he had never seen me!' exclaimed Beatrice, clapping her hands together in great perplexity.

'Nay, be assured all will be right

at last, Miss Beatrice, and you will say that the day of seeing him was the brightest of your life.'

'I hope so but I fear not.'

'I am glad to hear you say you hope so. Now he frank and bold like yourself in this matter. There will be no harm in his being an apprentice for a while, till you know and love one another, as I feel you must yet.'

Beatrice was silent for a few moments. She seemed to be struggling between maidenly propriety, filial faith, and the newly awakened love in her bosom for the unknown young man. At length she seemed to have come to a determination, for, raising her face cheerfully and looking Ruth full in the eyes, she said:

'I have resolved how to act.'

'How, Miss Beatrice?' asked Ruth earnestly.

'As I am, as it were, thrust upon this, I will, out of—out of—of gratitude to the young man, go down with you, and if it shall appear that he is not an apprentice, but the young gentleman disguised as one, I will myself, in order to save him from the consequences of his rash folly, perform his task for him.'

'Oh, just what I was about to ask you!' joyfully exclaimed Ruth, clapping together her hands and almost dancing.

'I will, as I said, perform his task for him, and thus relieving him from the danger he has placed himself in, command him, when he shall see my father in the morning, to decline service with him, and at once take his departure.'

'He may not be willing to obey.'

'Then he is not worthy of a thought of my regard. If he be the excellent person you say, he will not force his presence upon me, and will take pleasure in complying with my wishes.'

'I don't know but what you are right, Miss Beatrice,' answered Ruth, thoughtfully. 'It will be best that he should go. But then——'

'Well, but then, what, Ruth?'

'It will be a pity if you are never to meet again.'

'That will be as it shall prove to be. But there must be no delay if we would act. My father always falls asleep as soon as he is in bed. Go carefully and get the key. Do not wake him for the world.'

'If I should, I will make some good excuse,' answered Ruth, quitting the room and approaching that of her master with the stealthy step of a kitten.

'This is the only course that I can take, so far as I see,' said Beatrice to herself, as she was left alone. 'It is perplexing every way. But, if this young man be indeed the same person who has so fastened upon my soul, I will at all risks rescue him from the consequences of his folly. Can he indeed love me? Who can he be? Alas I tremble to ask, lest he should be too high to regard other than with mockery the love of one so lowly as I.'

'I have it!' cried Ruth, suddenly reappearing, holding the massive key in her hand.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE young apprentice who had been left to the ordeal by which David Goulbourne tested the skill in his craft of all aspirants for employment with him, having taken up the watch and examined its exterior, shook his head with a blank expression on his fine face.

'It is no use for me to open it,' he said with a perplexed manner. 'It is a watch no doubt like all watches, and I well know I can take it to pieces in no other way than by breaking it up with a hammer. If this was all, it would be easy enough; but to put it together again, there is the rub. I fear if my success in winning the heart of the fair Beatrice is to depend on my skill as a goldsmith's apprentice, I shall have to give up in despair and try to win her some other way. I am fortunate in having so soon the confidence of her maid. This is half the field. Now if I could manage this watch that I gaze at so helplessly, and so be installed here as her father's 'prentice, I shall have a fair field for the rest, inasmuch as she will not be guarded against a mere apprentice. I thought I saw that pretty maid of her's looking at my hands in the entry out there. They are rather too *blanche* for a goldsmith's apprentice, and I must take some of this coke of the furnace and blacken them a little. But, first, I had best see how I am to manage the watch. This comes of falling in love with a lowly maiden. The old jeweller says he must watch me a while. He may well do so, for I have come to rob him

of his fairest jewel. But this watch—all depends on this little glittering bauble. Tie, tie, tie! It seems to be tittering at my want of skill, fairly laughing at me, while its hands point warningly to the flying hours.

'I may as well lie down on the settee here and sleep till morning as sit up here. Tick away, little watch! you need not have any fears for yourself to-night. I see how it will be; in the morning the old gentleman will unlock the door and take up the watch. How will he know that I have not separated it, and put it again together? I will not ask that, for I will not attempt to deceive him. If I am just now playing the character of a London 'prentice, I must not forget that I am a gentleman and cannot lie. I should be unworthy of his fair daughter to seek her favor by an open falsehood. Doubtless, too, he would detect me. So the result will be that I shall be dismissed by him in disgrace to-morrow, as not knowing anything of my business, and perhaps I shall have to go without even an opportunity of seeing or speaking with the fair girl for whom I have consented to be locked up here all night. Hark! I hear a light step overhead. It may be her own. I thought all had retired. Perhaps it is the goldsmith creeping down to ascertain whether I am at work or not. I will move these tools briskly about, and so quiet his apprehensions if it should happen to be he.'

'Do you hear him? He is at work!' whispered Beatrice, as she noiselessly followed Ruth down the stairs.

'Hush, Miss Beatrice, we shall be heard by master.'

'But if he is at work, he is an apprentice.'

'Perhaps he is trying to break out.'

'I hope not.'

'So do I, for I want you to see him.'

'I don't mean for that; but it would create such a disturbance if he breaks out.'

'Don't speak. All is silent again.'

'Then go forward.'

'Please hold the light while I fit the key in the padlock and turn it,' said Ruth, in a whisper, as she stopped opposite the door.

Ruth unlocked and removed the padlock without noise, but as she took away the bar, the sound caught the ear of the young man. He rose up and quickly approached the door to listen.

'The goldsmith is coming, I see, to pay me a visit. I must plead a headache for not being at work; and so get off as well as I can in the morning. I see that my enterprise, so boldly conceived, has failed in the outset, and all on account of this wretched Geneva watch. I will retreat and sit down and support my head in my hand. What a time he is opening the door, and how softly, as if he expected to catch me napping or pilfering his jewels. Ah, good master goldsmith, thou hast a jewel up stairs worth more to me than all thy labelled rubies, diamonds and jewels. Diamonds out-rivalling thine are her eyes, rubies out-blushing thine are her lips, and her teeth laugh at the duller lustre of thy pearls.'

'You should knock upon the door, Ruth.'

'I hear whispering. There is mis-

chief or women, where there is whispering. I must see what this is.'

'There is no need to knock. I will speak as I open the door,' said Ruth.

While the young man's eyes were closely fixed upon the door, it slowly opened, light streamed in, and he saw the round pleasant face of the maid thrust in cautiously, while she said in a warning tone—

'So, master Faithful, don't speak. It is me.'

Master Faithful, who had at once recognised her, had presence of mind enough to obey, and wait the issue of what he saw, which was likely to be a very different affair from a visit from the goldsmith. Ruth seeing him standing by the work bench, now advanced, and said in an under tone—

'Be silent, or speak only above your breath. We have stole down here to—'

'Well! Who is with you?' he asked quickly,

'Dear me, how curious you are,' said Ruth, and she pushed the door to behind her, though not so close but that it was ajar. There is the watch and not touched. I knew so.'

'Know so, do you?' he cried with surprise. 'Pray how did you know so—and will you tell me, my fair friend, to what good fortune do I owe this strange visit?'

'Don't flatter yourself, now master Faithful; for it is only through pity that brought us.'

'U! Are you in the plural number?'

'I knew that the watch would bring you out,' she said, without replying to his interrogatory. 'A pretty ap-

prentice. 'What a rare workman you will make. Master Goulbourne will be very much benefitted by your skill.'

'You are laughing at me, and I see you suspect me,' he said, somewhat embarrassed.

'Suspect! Do I not know?' she said, playfully. 'Pray tell me why you have not begun to take this watch to pieces?'

'Why?'

'Yes, why?'

'Well, really, a watch is not to be taken to pieces in a moment!'

'Nor put together again. Confess, Master Apprentice.'

'Well, I confess, for I am detected.'

'You are not an apprentice?'

'I am not.'

'You are not George Faithful?'

'What an inquisitor!'

'Is your name George Faithful?'

'It is George.'

'Is it Faithful?'

'No.'

'How do you expect to get out of this difficulty, when my master comes to see if you have done your task?'

'I shall have to confess my ignorance and go.'

'Worse than that. You know what I told you about the man Lord Bresseles sent as a spy, as he was?'

'Yes.'

'Well, my master is angry enough about that. So, in the morning, if he finds you are not what you professed to be, he will become so enraged with suspicion that he will have you sent to prison.'

'Have you come to aid my escape? I trust so, for I shall need a good angel to extricate me.'

'Wilt thou tell me what has brought thee hither? Is it to rob my master?'

'No. Yet it is to rob him!'

'You confess, then?'

'Don't fly. It is to rob him, but not of these jewels—of one far more valuable than any that the East can furnish, or any that sparkle on a king's crown. Canst thou keep the secret, if I tell it to thee?'

'I can guess. It is my mistress.'

'Thou hast guessed right. I came in this disguise to steal her heart, if perchance, I might, and then, with her father's consent, wear her as a glorious jewel in my bosom. But little did I anticipate the test I should be put to in the outset of my apprenticeship,' he answered, with a smile.

'And why hast thou come in this disguise?'

'I knew that the goldsmith would be wary of any one above his own rank visiting his daughter, and so I assumed the character you see me in, and which, as this untouched watch can testify, I have so poorly sustained.'

'Dost thou not know that thou art in great danger, not only by incurring my master's resentment, but perhaps of being thrown into prison as a suspicious person.'

'I must abide the consequences; for it is impossible for me to perform the task assigned me. Where is thy fair mistress? If I could speak with her, but for five minutes, I should have well incurred, and will cheerfully bear all risks.'

'Thou dost not deserve to see her. But I will tell you that she feels an interest in your safety.'

'She does? Then she suspects I am not what I seem.'

'And she is angry. But, nevertheless, out of pity and benevolence, and to prevent any mischief coming of your being here, she is willing, in the generosity of her heart, to help thee out of thy difficulty.'

'Noble Beatrice.'

'Sir,' said Beatrice, at this moment, entering the room, 'I have heard sufficient to assure me of your imprudence and danger in coming here. I will however endeavor to befriend you.'

The young man, upon seeing her enter, started with surprise and pleasure, and looked as if he could hardly credit his sight. She instantly recognised the beaming glance which had won her heart, and although she came in with a firm step and grave countenance, intending to reprove him, she stood blushing and confused before his ardent, almost worshipping gaze.

'Pardon me, fair Beatrice,' he said, approaching her, with an expression of mingled happiness and apprehension, being afraid he had offended when he would have conciliated. 'I confess my imprudence, but I did not anticipate detection so soon. I hoped under this disguise to win your heart; for mine you have already. Forgive me if I have displeased you.'

'You speak boldly, sir.'

'It is my deep love for you that makes me bold, and that has caused me to be in this disguise.'

'I cannot listen to you, sir, further,' she said, endeavoring to speak with firmness, though her heart pleaded for tenderness towards the handsome young man who knelt before her with an air so subdued—so respectful. 'My maid believing she had reason to suspect you were not what you seemed, and, grateful to you for the service done her, has, with much entreaty, prevailed upon me to consent to relieve you, provided her suspicions, on coming here, should be confirmed. I overheard at the door your confession of being disguised, and while I feel suitably affected by your interest in one so humble as I am, I cannot be a party to this deception, at least, and farther than this security is confirmed. I am aware, sir, that my father, on finding you are not what you seem, will be highly incensed against you, for his suspicions are lively just now, and he will no doubt visit me with his displeasure, though I am innocent of your presence here.'

'I see that I have erred in taking this step. Your maid has informed me of the deception practised by a man of lord Bresseles, and I acknowledge that should your father see that I am not what I suppose to be, he will have reason to be angry. But the idea of bringing displeasure on you humbles and grieves me. How shall I remedy this error into which my passion for you has led me?'

'Do not speak so freely, sir,' answered Beatrice, trying to be severe.

'You forget that you are a stranger to me, nay that you are assuming a character that is not your own, whatever that may be.'

'I fear that if I tell thee who I am thou wilt banish me forever from thy presence.'

'Thou hast nothing to fear from the truth,' answered Beatrice, who, each moment, became more and more interested in the young man, and she felt that she would gladly, did she dare so far to overpass the bounds of maidenly decorum, tell him her love for him as frankly as he had told his for her. 'But it is surprising that you should speak to me of a passion, sir, for one, whom you can never have seen, unless at a distance.'

'I have seen thee oftener than thou hast perceived.'

'Nay; I have never perceived thee but once.'

'Yet then I met thy eyes and lost to thee my heart, maiden. That once will never be forgotten by me.'

'Nor by me,' thought Beatrice with pleasure, as she heard thus from his own lips the sweet assurance that her love was reciprocated.

Beatrice felt like uttering aloud this confession; for there was a noble ingenuousness in the young man, accompanied by his confessed passion for her, that almost drew her from herself to make him a full confidant of the secret of her heart.

Ruth began to feel that she would be doing them both a service, by telling him plainly that Beatrice cared as much for him as he did for her. But she was restrained by the discreet consideration that the stranger had not yet declared his name or rank, and might yet prove unworthy of her.

'What can he mean by saying that if he tells who he is,' she mused within herself, 'Miss Beatrice may banish him and never speak to him again. This would be a great pity; for if ever two were formed for each other, it is them. Perhaps he is so far above her in rank, (and this I half-suspect, though he seems too modest to be a lord,) that they never can marry; or else he is so poor that, knowing she is an heiress, her father will never consent to their being married. I will ask him at once. Please, sir, if your name is not George Faithful, will you tell my mistress what it is?'

'It is George Cecil. I am the only son of a widow, and I am only a secretary to a person at Court. I cannot offer thee, maiden, more than my heart and hand. I know thou art esteemed wealthy among the maidens of thy degree. But this I care not for so that thou wilt be mine. I know that proud nobles would bend the knee to thee, and——'

'Nay, do not mock me with such flattery, Mr. Cecil. Wert thou a noble I should tremble, for I know that maidens such as I, can never wed with lords of the realm; nor do I aspire to it. In saying thou art poor and a widow's son and an humble secretary, thou hast greatly relieved my fears, for I trembled lest thou shouldst prove too high above me.'

'I thought,' said Ruth, who seemed pleased that the young man came within the limits of her mistress's condition, (yet was *secretly* disappointed that he was not a lord!) 'thou wert at least an Esquire's or a baronet's son, and, although I knew my mistress was fit for a lord's bride, I

for all there would be an end of her acquaintance, if you were above her. I am so delighted that you are only a gentleman's son, for her sake. There is some hope now, and I always said that Miss Beatrice would marry above her father's trade, for her beauty if not for her goodness; though master has said she shall never marry a man who cannot take to pieces and put together again a watch.'

'Has he said so? Then, if I would have any hope left, I must at once set to, to learn at least to do this. But, sweet Beatrice, if thus I win thy father's favor and consent, wilt thou give me thine?'

Beatrice was silent. She looked happy and alarmed. Her heart was already his, yet she feared to make the confession.

'If you do not speak, Miss Beatrice, I will speak for thee.'

'Nay, Ruth, not—'

'Master Cecil, you need have no fear,' persevered Ruth. 'Miss Beatrice has loved you from the moment she saw you when your eyes met this morning.'

'Ruth, Ruth!' cried Beatrice, deeply blushing, yet looking more pleased than angry.

'Dearest Beatrice!' cried the young man, 'these words fill me with joy I cannot express. I am at this moment the happiest of human beings. Thou wilt not gainsay what my ears have just heard? Let me believe that my deep passion for thee is requited.'

He took her hand in his. She did not withdraw it till he had pressed it to his lips.

'From this hour be our hopes, our

fears, our joys one, sweet Beatrice,' he said with emotion.

Tears trembled upon the dark eyelashes of the maiden, tears of happiness and hope. She did not reply for a moment, and then said:

'I know not why I have given thee up so freely my heart. It is thine. But how darest thou to commit thy destiny to one whom thou hast scarcely seen? I might ask myself the same question; but I will not too closely interrogate what I have done this night. I have acted from impulse rather than reflection.'

'You shall never repent of this act, dear Beatrice. You ask me how I have dared. I knew thee before I beheld thee. Dost thou not remember the Covenanter's widow who dwelt thy next-door neighbor some number of years?'

'Anne Colville!'

'Yes.'

'She became a housekeeper to Lord —Lord Somebody,' said Ruth, trying to recollect.

'To Lord Exeter,' said Beatrice.

'Yes; I have told you that I have been a secretary. It was to Lord Exeter. There I saw this Mistress Anne, who often talked to me of your beauty and graces of mind and person, fair Beatrice. She first taught me to love you, even before I had seen you.'

'How wonderful!' exclaimed Ruth. 'That accounts, then, for Miss Beatrice loving you as soon as she saw you, for she read in your eyes your love for her. Now it is plain as can be.'

These words of the young lover

were very gratifying to Beatrice, and half excused her to herself for so readily giving away her heart. She showed her gratification in her face without disguise. From this moment she felt that she could love him without reserve.

CHAPTER IX.

THE confession of George Cecil, that he had learned to love Beatrice long before he had seen her, through the representations of Anne Colville, seemed to excuse her to her own pride and maidenly propriety for so readily admitting him to her heart. They seemed, the two lovers, to have known each other for years, so well did they understand, as if by instinct, the state of each other's heart. A mutual sympathy in their natures had in the first interview blazed into love.

As Ruth looked from one to the other and saw how happy they looked under this mysterious union of their souls so singularly brought about, she could not but feel very happy herself. Still there secretly lurked in her mind the wish that the young apprentice had been at least so high as a baronet's son. Nevertheless, she liked him so well, and had been so taken with him from the first, that she felt that she could forgive him for not being more than a widow's son, and a clerk.

'His doing nothing but writing,' thought she, 'accounts for his having such delicate, lordly hands! Well, I know he deserves Miss Beatrice; I

read it in his eyes. And it is well he is not a baronet or lord, or he would never think of having Miss Beatrice as his wife; it is better for her own happiness that he is only what he is. But he is the properest and genteelst young secretary I have ever seen! But if he is going to have Miss Beatrice, he must learn to undo a watch, or Master Goulbourne will never give him his consent. Dear me, how happy Miss Beatrice looks! Well, if it isn't as good as a story in a book to think how the young man she loved at first sight should also have loved her, and come here to her, disguised as an apprentice. Miss Beatrice,' she said aloud, 'if you are going to take the watch to pieces, you had best begin; and while you do it, I would advise Master Cecil to look well at it, that he may know how to do it. You know how much depends upon it.'

Beatrice smiled, and said to the young secretary, as she sat down at the work bench in the seat he had vacated:

'Will you learn how from me?'

'I will try and be an apt apprentice, fair Beatrice,' answered the young man, as he bent over her, while with a graceful hand she opened the case of the watch and prepared, like one well skilled in what she was about, to take it apart.

'Now watch me well,' she said, smiling and fixing her dark eyes on his, but instantly dropping the lids as they met their warm glances beaming with tenderness.

'I will note every step of thy progress, sweet Beatrice. What exquisite touch it requires. Methinks thy

fair fingers were made for such delicate work.'

'Nay, my father hath a lighter touch than I,' she answered laughingly. 'But if thou carest to learn be attentive; and heed more the work than the worker.'

'Remember what depends on thy knowing, Master Cecil,' said Ruth with more anxiety.

'I can never forget. I am all attention.'

Beatrice now placed at hand a pair of forceps and a small screw-driver, a little steel hammer and a curved needle, and proceeded to perform her task. The watch divested of its case she held up and asked him if he saw how the cases were taken off.

'I marked every movement.'

'Can you do it again?'

'Yes and put them on!'

'You are apt to learn!'

'I should be dull indeed not to be so with such a prize as depends on my knowledge of the art.'

'Dear me, he flatters like a lord, Miss Beatrice,' said Ruth, laughing.

'It is doubtless seeing them at court, Miss Ruth. But the expression of the heart's deep feeling is not flattery!'

'Be attentive, sir,' cried Beatrice, playfully. 'Thou seest these four screws which I am removing one after the other. It disengages the cap from these pillars! Now you can see the work of the watch complete. Inclosed in that brass trough there between the pillars is the musical box. I now draw this screw and it plays!'

'What sweet tones!'

'It plays till it runs down! When

I put it together again it will play another tune; so that my father will know when he tries the tune whether it has been taken to pieces or not!'

'Then I should have been discovered had I been tempted to deceive him.'

'Most certainly! Now this wheel is removed by drawing the pin from this pivot! Dost thou look?'

'I am all attention! Nothing escapes me!'

He answered truly. He watched every motion of her fingers and marked with the closest attention all that was done. From time to time his eyes would linger upon the fair fingers and admire their graceful movements, and sometimes steal up to her face.

But an 'ah!' from her in playful reproach recalled him to his duty.

At length the watch lay before her upon the bench in all its separate parts. An hour had been passed by her in the complete directions. Notwithstanding the fixed attention he gave, there were little moments in which he managed to pur into her ear words of tenderness and devotion. The hour, she felt was the happiest in her life. Bending together over the same movements, their cheeks almost touching!, it was love's propitious hour for binding their hearts closer in one.

'It is done!' said Beatrice, as she laid the last piece upon the green velvet cloth that covered the bench. 'Hast thou marked every part well for it cost my father many hours and care to teach me.'

'Thou hadst not the motive for

learning that I have, Beatrice! I bid me hope that thou wilt some day have fixed every step of the process in my memory. I can put the watch together if thou wilt give me permission.'

'You will find the task more than you believe,' she said, with gratified surprise at his confident assertion.

'No! I have reversed in my mind the whole process as you were at work, and I can do what I say.'

'I will watch you and correct any mistake you make!'

The young secretary cheerfully sat himself down to the task, and giving himself to it, he accomplished it in little less than an hour without making but one mistake, a slight one which her watchful eyes discovered and pointed out to him. He completed the whole work even to the replacing the case! When he had done it and held it up in triumph to Beatrice, she said, what she had began almost to believe:

'You are more a jeweler than you would confess to be. I believe you have learned from others how to do this.'

'Only from thy sweet teaching, Beatrice.'

'You are then a promising pupil. Dost thou see this, Ruth?'

Ruth made no answer; and upon looking around she was discovered fast asleep with her head on the chest of drawers. Beatrice was about to awake her when the secretary taking her hand in his said with earnestness:

'Let me embrace this moment to learn from thy lips my fate, Beatrice?'

not far hence be mine.'

'I have told thee that my heart is yours; for it is vain for me to conceal it, nor do I wish to. But I am my father's not my own. So far as I can give myself away I am yours. But there are——'

'You hesitate. I know what you would say. That there are inquiries touching me. These I am willing he should make. It is right that you should know more of me. He shall be referred to one he well knows and esteems, the Mistress Colville.'

'If she speaks well of thee, my father will be thy friend.'

'I will refer him to her. I fear not the result if he goes to her; for she knows me and my life, and will give him the true character of one who seeks alliance with his daughter. Wilt thou then be mine if thy father give thee to me?'

'Hast thou not had my answer?' she said in the most lovely confusion.

He stole a kiss from her lips by way of pledge and was turning round to see if Ruth had discovered this play, when he confronted in full visage the goldsmith himself. The start of surprise drew Beatrice's eyes in the same direction, and upon seeing her father exclaimed and awaked Ruth, who on beholding him shrieked aloud!

'I have no excuse, my dear father, none to offer!' cried Beatrice. 'I must seem to you very guilty, but——'

'Beatrice, be not alarmed and do not kneel to me! Things might have been worse than they are,' spoke her

father in a voice without anger, and a countenance kindly in its looks. 'I know all, for I have heard and seen all. Neither of you may offer any explanation or excuse. I confess myself not a little surprised at what I have discovered, but as you are clearly innocent, Beatrice, of this young gentleman's presence here, I have nothing to forgive in you, save to censure you for so freely letting him have your heart. As for the young man himself, I am pleased with his manner of conversation and his ready reference to Mrs. Colville, a worthy and sensible woman, assures me that he must maintain a good name: It is true, young sir,' continued David Goulbourne, addressing himself to the secretary who stood before him looking mortified and unhappy, while Beatrice seemed overcome with grateful joy at her father's leniency; 'You have done a very imprudent thing in coming to my abode in this disguise. It is against you greatly, this piece of deception. If you loved my daughter and were worthy of her why did you not come to me openly and ask her of me.'

'I wished first to learn, by my own observation, if her character so beautifully drawn by Mistress Colville answered to the picture of it; and knowing the antipathy that unhappily exists between the town people and the court, I knew that if I came openly I should find no favor, and rather be received with suspicion. So I assumed this disguise. In love, sir, as well as in war, stratagems are deemed lawful.'

'As your intentions, young sir, seemed to be honorable, I will pass by the deception you have practised upon me,' answered David Goulbourne, 'for there is something in your face, as well as in your words that I have overheard, which assures me that you are an honorable person.'

'And, master, will you forgive me?' said Ruth, who stood uncertain what would be her fate.

'Yes, for you acted with Beatrice and with her consent. Know, maiden, that I was not asleep when you came and removed the key from my table. I rose up and dressed and came softly after you, and have heard all that passed from the first. You have done wrong in doing as you have, for if by any chance I had lost my goods to-night, and I had discovered that you had been here, I should have accused you and cast you into prison. But let this pass, since it is no worse. Beatrice, now I will bid you good night. Go at once to your chamber; and, Ruth, follow her. I wish to have a word or two with this young gentleman.'

Beatrice felt that she could not speak a word in objection to his command. Thankful from the bottom of her heart at the manner in which her father had taken the discovery he had made, she almost feared to glance at her lover as she retired, yet she did so, caught his eyes bent upon her, and looked a 'good night' to him.

When she reached her chamber, she sank into a chair and burst into tears, tears of joy and shame. Ruth, looking as if she should faint with her own

fears, stood by her as pale as death. It was some moments before either of them could speak or recover from the shock they had received now that they could give vent to their feeling without any restraint.

'Miss Beatrice, was ever anything so unlucky?' at length said Ruth, after she had shut the door of the room. 'I tremble like a leaf. I shall never dare look my master in the face after stealing his key and all. He forgave me, but I fear he will always be angry with me. Who would have thought it? I was so sure he was asleep. Dear me! it makes my knees so weak to think of it. And his coming in, too, and catching you there. Was ever anything so unlucky?'

'It was most lucky, Ruth, as things have turned out. It has brought things to a crisis at once. How good and kind my dear father is.'

'And this Master Cecil—did I tell you the half about him? Isn't he so noble and gentle? I do hope all will come out right at last. I wonder what master can have to say to him. I tremble so.'

'Do not fear. My father never acts by impulses, doing this one moment and repenting the next. Be assured he forgives both you and me, as he has said, and bears no hostility to Mr. Cecil. But if he had chanced to come down only at the last moment and come in upon us, there is no doubt at all that he would have been so confounded and enraged at the discovery that no explanation of mine or of Mr. Cecil's could ever have pacified him. He would have believed me a party in the conspiracy, and no doubt

visited his vengeance upon all three in a most formidable manner.'

'I am so thankful that things are no worse. How strange that he was so quiet about it.'

'He gathered from our conversation the exact position of things, and was, therefore, able to judge us with proper judgment. He saw in Mr. Cecil an ardent, honorable young man, who had resorted to a stratagem to become acquainted with me, of whom he had heard so much from Mrs. Anne; and he discovered in me a too susceptible heart which had impulsively surrendered itself to him. He saw that we were deeply interested, even on our short acquaintance, one in the other; nay, he had heard us pledge ourselves to each other, and so, desirous of my happiness, resolved to ascertain if this Mr. Cecil were a suitable person, and then give his consent to our union. You were asleep, I believe, Ruth,' concluded Beatrice, with an arch smile.

'Dear me! so I must have been. I was dreaming Spaukie was putting the marriage ring on my finger and asking me if he should be married in a white or orange cravat. I was just going to say orange, for it is my favorite color, when you cry out something, and I wake, and the first thing I see is master in the room. I shall never forget it till my dying day.'

'I hear my father coming up stairs. Let us be silent.'

'Beatrice!' he called at the door.

'Sir!' she answered, opening it, and as she did so, she cast herself into his arms, crying, with tears:

'My dear, dear father, how can I

accept of your forgiveness for my great imprudence?"

'You have it freely,' he answered, kissing her. 'I do not deny your imprudence but——'

'It is all my blame, sir,' said Ruth, openly. 'I first told her that he was not an apprentice at all, but the young gentleman she had thought so much of who had passed the lattice. I advised her to go down and open the watch, sir.'

'Then you have seen him before?'

'Yes, father, once; and I was so foolish as to let that once deeply affect my heart.'

'Well, well, I know all about it. He has told me all,' said her father smiling, and patting the hair back from her brow. 'I am satisfied that he will make you an excellent and very kind husband.'

When Beatrice heard these words fall from her father's lips she raised her eyes and looked in his face with such deep joy that he said:

'How wonderful it is that you love him so deeply. Do you think it is abiding love, Beatrice?'

'Abiding, sir. I can never cease to entertain towards him the same sentiments which I now do.'

'Then keep heart, for you will not be disappointed in him. Since he has told me who he is, I find that I have some knowledge of him.'

'And he is worthy?'

I have told him that I consent to his union with you. What more can I say, Beatrice?' answered her father with a smile. 'Do not fear to love him; for I know that he loves you. Since you came up we have had an

interesting conversation, and be assured that I am satisfied you will not regret having loved at first sight. Now go to bed, and to-morrow we will talk further upon the subject.'

'One word, dear father.'

'Well, two of them if you will.'

Where is he?

'Departed. I thought and so did he that he had best go to his own abode, since things have turned out as they have.'

'So late, and so dangerous to be abroad.'

'Do not fear for him, Miss Beatrice,' said Ruth. 'I will warrant you he will fight if he meets foes. But one thing I have against him, and that is his telling me that he saw Jerry pressed, and so knew from that you wanted an apprentice. If he is no apprentice how should he know Jerry.'

'He has explained this to me,' answered the goldsmith, smiling. 'He sent the duke's men to the ale-house that Jerry, who was drinking there might be pressed, and so he might get his place. He knew Jerry by having seen him come in and out here; for he has watched and passed the house oftener than you have seen him. I have to thank him for getting the varlet well off out of the way. Now, good night and pleasant dreams, daughter.'

'How pleasant master is,' said Ruth, after he had for the second time that night, retired to his room: but not without first having looked to see if the king's bracelet was secure in the cabinet where he had placed it; 'he is certainly as much taken with this Master George Cecil as you are, Miss Beatrice.'

'Or you either, Ruth. This is the happiest night of my life.'

'How nicely every thing goes on. I wonder when you will be married.'

The maiden's reply was prevented by a loud hammering at the street door.

CHAPTER X.

At the startling sound at the door at so late an hour, for it was already midnight, Beatrice looked surprised while Ruth's cheek became pale.

'Who can it be?'

'It can be no one to harm us, Ruth, be assured, or they would not come so noisily,' answered her young mistress.

'There it is again! Hark! They call for master Goulbourne!'

'My father has heard, for he is moving in his room.'

The next moment the goldsmith came out, and seeing Beatrice and Ruth with their door open, he said:

'Do not be terrified, daughter. It is doubtless a king's messenger by the mode of assault upon my door!'

'What can he want at this hour of the night, sir?'

'I know not till I ask him, unless it be that he hath sent for his diamond clasp to have it betimes in the morning.'

'He might have waited till the morning, methinks,' said Ruth, 'and not frighten people this way at midnight with his saucy and noisy messengers.' But I suppose at court day is night and night is day with them;

for I am told they keep up till sunrise and sleep till noon.'

'Hist, maid!' said Mr. Goulbourne. 'Thou forgettest thou art speaking of the king's household. Thy tongue will one day bring mischief upon thee.'

With this reproof David Goulbourne hastened down stairs, and having put his key into the lock of the door, paused ere he opened it and said:

'Who is it that is without?'

'The king's master of the wardrobe!' answered a stern voice. 'Open and not keep me waiting here, or I will make my knaves batter thy door in, fellow!'

The goldsmith, too familiar with the style of the courtiers of the king as well as of their servants to take umbrage at this mode of address, unlocked his door, and removing the iron bar, stood in the opening. Two horsemen were in the street, one of whom said:

'Why hast thou been so dilatory, Master Smith?'

'I came as soon as I could, sir!'

'Make haste and bring me the king's jewel that thou hast. He will be up early and away to meet the Swedish Ambassador and we will be too much occupied to come for it in the morning! Come, speed thee?'

'The king's chamberlain left it with me, sir,' answered David; 'and he bade me not deliver it to any one again save himself, or to one bearing the king's signet.'

'I commend thy caution. Here is the king's signet, by which thou mayst see I am a proper person for you to deliver it to.'

The possessor placed in the goldsmith's hand the signet, who examining it, by the light of the lamp which he held in his hand, at once recognised it, for he had once ret the stone in it himself.

'It is sufficient authority. Thou shalt have the clasp, sir,' answered David. 'Wilt thou alight?'

'Nay, bring it to me hither.'

David returned up stairs and unlocking the cabinet took from it the clasp, and carried it down to him in its case.

'There it is, sir. Say to the king that it will not be out of repair soon again, as I have secured each of the settings.'

'I will so inform his majesty,' answered, the horseman, as he received the case, which he opened to ascertain if the jewel was in it, and then placed it in his bosom. 'Good night, or rather good morning, master Goldsmith.'

'Good night, gentlemen,' answered the goldsmith. They rode off at a round pace, and soon disappeared in the next street towards the palace. He stood at the door till the echo of their horses' hoofs were no longer heard, and then was about going in and closing his door, when one of his neighbors opposite, a cordwainer, who had been brought to his window in his night-cap by the sound of the hammering on the goldsmith's door, called to him:

'Friend David, what officer of the king's household did this rider tell thee he was?'

'The master of the wardrobe is Sir

Peter Losley, at least he was to day; for I went to his house at noon with my quarter's bill and he paid it; as I do Sir Peter's work. That horseman who spoke to thee was not Sir Peter.'

'Art thou certain?'

'Sir Peter hath a small, weak voice and stutters a little at that. Thou didst run risk, neighbor, in giving up the jewel he asked for, if it were of value.'

'Nay, he showed me the king's signet.'

'I hope all is right then! But it was not Sir Peter.'

'He may have been sent by Sir Peter,' answered David. 'I must either have delivered it to the king's signet or the king himself; and it is not likely he would have come for it.'

'I hope all is right, only it was not Sir Peter himself as he said he was, answered the cordwainer, perseveringly; and seeing David close his door he put his head in and shut his window

The street was once more still, and Beatrice and Ruth, hearing the goldsmith pass into his own chamber, retired for the night, little anticipating what the morrow would bring forth.

The sun had been about half an hour up, and David Goulbourne, having performed family worship, had just sat down to breakfast with Beatrice when a loud shout from the street reached their ears. From early day-light the town had been noisy and agitated in expectation of the grand procession of the king and ambassadors; and what with the galloping to

and fro of messengers from one to another, the marching by of the trainbands with trumpet and kettle-drum to take up their quarters in different posts in the town, and the confused hurrying and murmuring of the crowd running hither and thither to see what was to be seen. It was a sabbath morning little in unison with the goldsmith's feelings.

'The king will have much to answer for,' said David, as a second shout fell upon his ear, louder than the former. 'This breaking of the Lord's day by rulers in high places will bring a judgment upon the land. And this king who turns this holy day into a feast day for pomp and show is the head of the church. What would become of the land if all churchmen were like their chief. Instead of setting an example of holiness he sets himself up as a pattern of all disorder.'

'Master Goulbourne, cried the voice of the brazier from beneath the window, 'come out hither and look from thy balcony if thou wouldst see the bravery of the Spanish Ambassador and his people.'

'Father, let me go to the lattice—I will veil my face?' said Beatrice half rising.

'Do—let me and her too, good master!' chimed in Ruth.

'Well, thou mayest see for a little while,' answered David, as a burst of trumpets filled the street.

'Come, master Goulbourne!' called out the brazier; 'if thou wouldst see a rare sight, come forth now!'

This brazier hath the curiosity of a woman in him,' said David, as he

rose up slowly, while Beatrice and Ruth were already on the balcony. He followed them as if he cared not to see such things on the Lord's day yet nevertheless tempted by his curiosity; for he had a love for rich costumes, and he had heard that the dresses of the Ambassador of Spain and his people were gorgeous in the extreme. So, struggling between conscience and curiosity, he found himself also at the balcony.

The street was thronged with people of the lower class; and the doors, and windows, and balconies, and even roofs, were filled with spectators.

At the upper end of the street, he beheld the van of the Spanish party advancing, with trumpets sounding, banners flying, and horses caparisoned with such magnificence that in the beams of the sun they blazed like gold.

'The French ambassador is coming up Thread-needle Street, master Goulbourne,' said the brazier, who stood beneath the balcony, which was so low that he could touch it with his hand, and so easily talk with those upon it. 'He had three score swords to guard his suite and himself, and over one hundred in all.'

'The Spanish Ambassador seems to have a large number in his party,' observed David.

'They say he has fifty swords, and full a hundred men in all—forty on foot.'

'He is in his coach.'

'Yes, with six horses to draw it.—The French Ambassador also rides in his coach. Hark!—hear that! That

is the Frenchman's bugle of defiance. These Franks are an insolent and boasting set, and we all hope the gallant Spaniards may whip them thoroughly. The fight—if they come to blows about their quarrel—will come off hereabouts; for they will be sure to meet near the corner here, where the two streets come into one. With your leave, neighbor, I will climb up on thy balcony, out of harm's way. Though I sharpen swords, it is for other men's flesh, not my own!

'Thou art welcome, neighbor? But dost thou believe they will come to crossing steel about such a trifle as precedence in the procession that is to form from the palace?'

'Be sure of it, and we are lucky to get to see it. The king hath forbid all Englishmen meddling in it, and so we shall see it out and know who are the best men. Ah, gossip, whither away in such a hurry?' called the brazier from the balcony to one who was passing by.

'Ah, you up there, friend brazier!' responded the man who wore the uniform of the train-band. 'You will soon see a rare fight. The two parties will meet about here. But the French will get the worst of it, though to hear them boast and swear you would think they could take England.'

'Hast thou been to the French House?'

'That have I, and to the Spanish Palace too, for my band is dismissed from duty, the Mayor having enough in arms to keep the peace.'

'Then come up and tell what thou hast seen,' said the brazier.

But the man did not hear, for at

that instant the head of the French party appeared in the street, and were pressing forward to get ahead of the Spaniards, who were not yet up with the cross street by which the French had come into the main thoroughfare. As soon as the French were seen, the Spaniards galloped forward, shouting, 'Dios y Santiago!' The French answered by cries of 'St. Denis and France!' and hurried on to compass the street ahead of the Spaniards.

Both parties were evidently fully prepared for the meeting at this place, and in an instant foot guards at the heads of both, were engaged sword in hand. The Spaniards fought and pressed on, the French pressing forward also, they were soon intermingled in a fearful melee. The thousands who looked on shouted and huzzaed: and by their cries of 'down with the French! That was a good blow, Don Spaniard!' showed which way their sympathies ran.

The French fought with long pistols and fired at their antagonists, while the latter fought only with steel, of which they made good use. The ambassadors of each sat in their splendid coaches witnessing the conflict between their retainers, and now and then encouraging them. A party of French made their way to the Spanish coach, and proceeded to cut the harness, but their swords produced no impression!

'The Spaniards have lined their harness with chains of iron!' cried David to the brazier.

'Leave the Spaniards to take care of themselves,' answered the brazier to his friend, both of whom were

deeply interested spectators of the fierce combat. The French finding they were foiled by the superior sagacity of their foes, tried to kill the horses to the coach, but each horse had a swordsman appointed for its defence, and they were driven back; but the Spaniards penetrating to the French coach cut the harnesses, which were unprotected, and checked the advance of the ambassador, and after fairly routing his retainers, forcing them to retreat down the street, killing and wounding several, they gained the lead, and coach, horsemen, outriders and swordsmen falling into line, went forward at full speed past the goldsmith's, the people shouting and lauding them for their valor. The French ambassador had to remain seated half an hour in his coach, till his slain horses could be replaced by others, and his harness repaired, and all the while forced to bear with the jeers of the London populace, who rejoiced in the discomfiture of the representative of a nation which had been their hereditary foe for centuries. At length the French party moved forward amid the hisses and groans of the people who had half an hour before shouted the praises of the Spaniards; but instead of reaching the palace, he turned aside to his own abode, indignant, and burning with resentment.

'Well, Master Goulbourne,' said the brazier, after he had accepted the goldsmith's invitation to breakfast with him, 'this hath been as pretty a fray as I have seen in London streets since Monk came in. How well the Dons fight.'

'They are a brave people. How

many of the men were killed and hurt? Did not some one say as we came in?'

'The Don had four of his brave fellows killed and five wounded. Monsieur lost nine killed, and not under a score that had blood drawn. I heard one say in the street that the French ambassador as he went by, swore that he would leave England; for that the English fought against him on the side of the Spaniards.'

'I saw no Englishman engaged.'

'I did, three or four; and especially Will Ironarm, the smith, with his sledge knocked two of the French coach horses on the head. This I saw myself.'

'The king will have him arrested for this: because his interference may possibly lead to a quarrel with France.'

'The sooner the better.'

'We are in no condition to go to war. The king has no money, the Parliament has none, and the city of London hath none to lend to king or parliament, Beatrice, I fear there will be no going to conventicle to day,' added David, addressing his daughter, who had not long remained upon the balcony after the beginning of the bloody fray we have described; but would rather have shrunk within her room to get out of the noise of battle. 'The streets will be filled with idlers and it will be unsafe. The king's follies destroy all God's worship both in church and conventicle.'

'Doubtless he thinks he is too high for the laws of God to reach him.'

'There are more riders coming past. Do they stop here, Ruth?' he asked

as the sounds ceased opposite his door.

'Yes, master. It is a king's lord, I think, by his dress; and two valets with him, both with the king's badge on their hats.'

'It is my lord Chamberlain,' cried David, who had risen and gone to the window: 'I will go down to the door to receive him.'

'A fair good morning to thee, master goldsmith,' said the nobleman. 'I am on my way to the palace, and will take the king his clasp, as I promised his Majesty.'

'His Majesty hath it already, my lord. He sent last night for it at midnight.'

'Then my errand is done. Thou hast had a bloody-fray about here, master. The Spaniard, I hear, hath had the best of it.'

'Greatly so, my lord. The French ambassador had his harness cut, and could not go on,—they say he will go back to France.'

'Let him go, and he may and welcome,' answered the nobleman, as he put spurs to his horse, and rode off.

About half an hour afterwards, as the goldsmith was seated in his arm-chair, reading King James' Bible which was supported before him on a trifold, Ruth, whose curiosity to see all that was going on kept her at the lattice, exclaimed,

'Master, here is the lord Chamberlain back again, and hath with him six fellows with swords. He looks very fierce and displeased at somewhat. He is already off his horse at the door. Hear him?'

A loud knock at the same moment

reached the ears of the goldsmith, and he hastened down to the door, which he had no sooner opened than he beheld the lord Chamberlain, who in a stern voice said,

'How now, master Goldsmith? Didst thou not tell me the king had sent for the clasp?'

'I told you truly, my lord,' answered David, beginning to experience a misgiving at his heart, as he recalled what the cordwainer had said, and added it to this second visit of the king's chamberlain.

'The king hath not his jewel, nor hath he sent for it as thou sayest.'

'My lord, at twelve o'clock or little past, two horsemen came hither, one of whom said he was Sir Peter Losley. He demanded the clasp in the name of the king, and in proof of his authority showed me his Majesty's signet. Therefore I delivered it to him.'

'Then Sir Peter Losley hath it; yet the king saith plainly he sent no one for it.'

'Sir Peter hath it, my lord.'

'He is at the palace. Ride thither at full speed,' said the noble to one of his retinue, 'and ask Sir Peter Losley to ride to me here. I saw him in saddle in the palace yard not two minutes ago. I will wait here.'

'Come in, my lord, if you will honor my poor house.'

'I will stand within the door only. I trust, master goldsmith, this will be cleared up by Sir Peter; for the king on hearing what I told him, grew red in the face, and swore that he sent no one for it; and if you give not up the jewel to me, to arrest you on the

spot. For this purpose I have, as you see, come thus attended.'

'My lord, I am distressed. I certainly gave the clasp to one who bore the authority of the king's signet, who called himself also Sir Peter Losley.'

'Sir Peter will clear you, then. But if he do not bear thee out, it will go hard with you, master Goulbourne.'

'I feel that it must,' answered David, who was troubled at this dark shadow that seemed to be eclipsing his fair fame.

At length the messenger returned and Sir Peter Losley with him, whom he had no sooner seen approach, and heard who it was, than his heart failed him; for he saw he was a far different person in appearance from him to whom he had delivered the clasp.

CHAPTER XI.

'Sir Peter,' said the chamberlain as the knight rode up and drew rein near him; 'I have sent for thee to learn what thou hast done with the king's jewel which this honest goldsmith saith he gave into your hands the last night?'

'He is a dishonest goldsmith if he say so, my lord,' answered Sir Peter Losley with an oath. 'I have not spoken with the man in my life, much less hath he given me a jewel.'

'He is right my lord,' said David frankly. 'The knight is right. I have been deceived. He is not the cavalier into whose hands I gave the

clasp. Nevertheless he did represent himself to me as Sir Peter Losley; and did show me the king's signet in token of his authority. Some one has taken it by treachery.'

'What thou sayest may be true, master goldsmith, nevertheless I have no discretion to decide touching thy guilt or innocence,' answered the nobleman.

'Guilt, my lord? Does any one suspect me of guilt?'

'I say nothing, master Goulbourne. The king must decide the matter. I fear, however, it will go hard with thee, if thou canst not bring forward the person who showed thee the king's signet and to whom you gave the jewel. Take him into custody!'

These words were addressed to the five men of the king's guards who accompanied the lord chancellor, and before David could realise that he was a suspected man, he found himself a prisoner, and irons upon his wrists.

'My lord, this is terrible. Do not thus put me to shame before my neighbors. I am an innocent man. Nay, at least suffer me to return to my house to bid my child farewell, and lock up my effects!'

'I will leave a king's officer here to take charge till thou canst prove or disapprove thy innocence,' answered the nobleman coldly. 'Take him to Newgate, fellows, till the pleasure of the king shall be known.'

'My lord,——'

'Not a word! You are the king's prisoner. Lead him off. I will go and inform his majesty what thou sayest.'

'And tell the king,' cried David, as

the men were riding off with him led between two of their horses, 'tell the king that if the jewel be lost, I will make it good though it ruin me in my estate.'

'I will speak for thee fairly to his majesty,' answered the lord chamberlain, as he galloped off accompanied by Sir Peter Losley in another direction. Ruth, who had witnessed the arrest of her master, hastened to give the intelligence to her young mistress, who, being in her own room, had not heard what had passed.

'They are taking my master to Newgate!' she shrieked aloud, communicating her own alarm and grief to Beatrice ere she scarcely understood her words.

'Taking my father to Newgate? What hath he done?' she cried hastening to the street.

'Some one hath come and got of him the king's jewel by deceit, and stolen it off, and the king this morning calls for it, saying he hath sent no man for it.'

By this time Beatrice was at the door. A glance showed her the two guardsmen dragging off her father between them. She flew like the wind towards him, calling upon his name in thrilling tones of anguish. She would have approached him, but the soldiers kept her away by curvetting and reining back their horses.

'My dear father, what is this they charge against thee?' she cried, heedless of the people around and indifferent to the gaze and jeers of the rude soldiers.

'Nay, Beatrice, go home and look after the house and my goods,' an-

swered her father with as much firmness as he could command. 'The person to whom I gave the king's clasp last night was an impostor! The king charges me with the blame, and has arrested me till it be inquired into. Fear not for me. I shall be released and be at home with thee by noon. Do not follow me. But return and comport thyself with maidenly discretion; for thou seest all eyes are upon thee. There will be no harm come to me, though it is a grievous blow and sudden to be accused and borne away!'

Beatrice finding that the guards would not suffer her to come near her father, and being comforted by his words, she obeyed him and returned back to Ruth. But she had not got as far as the brazier's when the honest man stepped forth and said:

'Come in to my house, maiden, and I will protect thee till thy father comes back.'

'And will they acquit him, sir?' she asked with tears in her eyes.

'He hath done nothing, if I heard aright what passed between him and my Lord Chambelain, but what he can clear himself to the king. It seems some one hath taken the name of Sir Peter Losley, and with the king's signet stolen, or a forged one, got from him the jewel; and now the king commits him till he can prove his innocence of any guilt in the matter.'

'Prove his innocence, sir?' exclaimed Beatrice, with fear. 'Of what guilt do they accuse him?'

'The king, if he produces not the jewel, may be disposed to accuse

him of having himself taken it and secreted it for his own use!

'What! accuse my father of robbery?' she cried with indignation. 'But I see! I see! He *will* be accused unless he can prove that he gave it to this imposter!' Alas, my dear father! what evil hath so suddenly come upon thee and me! can I not see the king and bespeak his majesty in his behalf?

'It will do no good, maiden; and besides thou art too fair to appear at court as a petitioner. With the king and his courtiers thou would be as a lamb that strayeth into a den of lions. Thy words could not clear thy father, unless thou could'st prove and show to whom he did deliver the jewel!'

'This is true, indeed!' she answered sadly, 'what shall I do?'

'Come in, and remain here for the present, and I will go to Newgate and talk with thy father about this sad business, and see what can be done!'

'You are very kind, sir! But I will go to my own house to take care of my father's goods, as he bade me!'

'Yes, for there will be a rabble in upon them if the house be left open as it is,' said Ruth. 'Take heart Miss Beatrice! It will go well yet I am sure. So honest a man as your father and my master will never suffer for another's crime!'

'I will then go at once after thy father, maiden,' answered the brazier, putting on his coat. 'I will be his friend, though I am but an humble one!'

Beatrice pressed the hard hand of

the tradesman in silent expression of her gratitude, and then hurried to her own door. To her surprise, she beheld standing upon the threshold one of the king's guard with his sword drawn, and his bridle hanging loosely upon his arm.

She stopped and was uncertain whether to pass in past him or not, when seeing their embarrassment, he said with courtesy:

'Do not fear me! I am not here to keep out ladies, but rogues!'

'You are a kind and pleasant fellow,' said Ruth, 'and know how to be civil. Come, Miss Beatrice.'

The maiden hastened in, as he stepped aside for the purpose, and bidding Ruth lock the door and see that the shop was secured, she hastened up stairs, and with great presence of mind locked up her father's papers and everything that was valuable, or might compromise him at such a time; for he had among his papers, besides others, a letter from Cromwell, thanking him for his zeal and faithfulness on certain occasions, when his loyalty to the Protector was particularly tested.

'If,' thought Beatrice, 'it should go hard against my father, and they search his house, and find such papers as these, they will tend to prejudice the king against him, and do him an injury.'

'All is safe below stairs,' said Ruth, who could hardly speak for her grief. 'Oh, my poor master! I did think it so odd, too, that the king should send for his jewel at midnight! But how could my master refuse to deliver it to the king's signet?'

'I pray that he may soon be released with honor to himself and infamy to his foes,' cried Beatrice.

'I should like well to know who they were! I wish that young Master George Cecil were here to comfort and advise us! If I knew where to send for him I would let him know what has happened, and I dare say, as he lives about the Court he might help your father!'

'He is too humble in station, a poor young gentleman like him, a widow's son without influence,' answered Beatrice sadly. 'He could do me no good, though he might desire to do so with all his heart.'

'Yet if I knew where to send to him, I would do so.'

'Perhaps he may hear of it. But I trust the king will speedily release my poor father! To see him dragged off so between two horsemen, my grey-haired father, it has nearly broken my heart.'

'Hope for the best! The noblest lords are arrested every day and sent to the tower.'

'They are guilty, but my father is an innocent man. I feel an impulse to hasten at once to the king.'

'You don't stir a step, Miss Beatrice. The king would no sooner see you than he would be sure to keep your father in prison, so that——'

'No more! But what shall I do?'

'Wait patiently. We shall ere long get news. If either of us go let me go. I have it now.'

'What is it?'

'Miss Anne Colville will tell me all about him, and where to find him. He said she knew him. . It is but a

short walk. I will there at once. Now don't say a word. I've made up my mind. Somebody must befriend my master; for the more I think of his case, the worse it appears to me.'

'Who will you go to see?'

'George Cecil. I will ask him to go and see master at Newgate, and get from him a description of the man he gave the jewels to. As master Cecil is a clerk of a lord he may be able, from seeing many of them, to tell who it is.'

'It may not be done by a lord.'

'It is done by no one else, be assured. It is just equal to such tricks as this. Buckingham, Bresseles, and Barehart. I will go and see, at any rate, what can be done! Do not open the door while I am gone.'

With these words the faithful Ruth put on her bonnet and tabby, and in a few moments was on her way to see the good old housekeeper, Anne Colville, and to ascertain from her where she could find George Cecil, the clerk.

Beatrice followed her with her prayers, though she had but little hope of her being able to raise up any friends for her father, from the source to which she was about to apply. This was the heaviest hour the maiden had ever yet known. Her heart was heavy with grief and anxiety, and her imagination tortured her with a thousand fears. It was in vain she reflected that even if the jewel were lost irrecoverably, her father's wealth would at least cover its value, though it might ruin him. She feared that such a compensation would not be taken, but that he would be condemned as a malefactor and his property confiscated.

With her mind tortured by these fears she paced up and down the room listening to every sound, and hastening to the window at the noise of every one riding by; though she scarcely knew whom she hoped or expected to see. Suddenly she heard horsemen trotting past and hearing them stop, she flew to the lattice. She recognised Lord Bresseles, passing with retainers, half a score, who was asking the soldier why he stood there on guard. Beatrice heard the soldier relate the circumstances, and then heard him say, with a parent sympathy—

‘Poor man. If he be innocent, I hope he will be able to clear himself by pointing out the rogue who cheated him. What hath become of the fair daughter of the unlucky goldsmith?’

‘She is within, my lord!’

‘I will see her, and comfort her, and offer her my services to speak to the king in behalf of her father.’

‘She will no doubt gladly see you, my lord, for she is above in great distress.’

At this very moment lord Bresseles caught sight of the face of Beatrice, who betrayed her gratitude at his sympathy for her father, and he bowed low and said respectfully, and with a well-feigned look of sorrow—

‘I grieve, maiden, at this misfortune which hath befallen thee! I am on my way to the king at Whitehall, and if you give me leave, I will bespeak his majesty in your father’s behalf.’

‘Nay, sir, answered Beatrice, ‘I fear it can do no good! It depends

on his being able to prove that he gave the king’s jewel to a person who exhibited the king’s signet. If he cannot prove this, there is no help, sir, for my father. You have my thanks, sir.’

With these words she left the lattice, for she liked not the way in which the free and unblushing young nobleman admired her with his eyes and all her original antipathy to him revived.

‘By my faith! a reserved wench,’ said Lord Bresseles, laughing to his valet, as he rode on. ‘Very well,’ he added to himself, ‘I will humble this proud bearing. Markham!’

‘My lord,’ answered the confidant.

‘You see how shy she is?’

‘Yes, m. lord.’

‘I shall get little favor by civility and playing the lover. To-night, if her father be kept in prison so long, the maiden shall be my captive in York Buildings.’

‘It will be very easy, my lord.’

‘And her father in prison, and likely to be ruined, will place her in my power! I can, you know, buy his release?’

‘Yes, my lord.’

We will now follow Ruth after her departure in search of the housekeeper of the old Countess of Exeter. She was not long in reaching the abode of this noble lady, which was in the vicinity of the king’s palace. Upon making known to the stately porter at the gate that she wished to speak a few words to Mistress Anne, he called to one of the maids and bade her show the young woman to the sitting-room in the wing of the palace, where the housekeeper kept.

'Mistress Anne, here is one who comes out of breath a-most, to speak with you,' said the maid as she opened the door.

Ruth entered the room, and was met by a respectable-looking, benevolent lady of middle age, who no sooner beheld her than she said with a smile of recognition, mingled with surprise :

'Dear bless me!—is not this Ruth?'

'Indeed it is, Mistress Anne. I did not believe you would know me.'

'Oh, yes!—take a seat—you seem ruffled.'

'I have a great affliction to tell you of, Mistress Anne.'

'Well, sit down, and tell me first how fares it with thy master, the honest David Goulbourne, and with his fair daughter Beatrice.'

'Sorrowfully enough! Thou shalt hear all. Three days ago the king sends a diamond clasp to my master, to get a setting put in; and the lord Chamberlain who left it tells him when it is done, not to deliver it to any one but to himself, or one bearing the authority of the king's signet. So last night, after the clock struck twelve, two horsemen came to the door and asks for it. One of them, who said he was Sir Peter Losley, showing the king's signet as his authority. So my master gave him the jewel. But this morning comes my lord Chamberlain also for the jewel; when, hearing my master's story, he sends forthwith to the king, who declares he hath not his jewel, and hath sent no one for it but my lord Chamberlain this morning. Therefore my master is arrested and dragged off to Newgate, on suspicion of having the

jewel in his own hands; and a guard is at the door to keep the house till the king's officer's come to search it.'

'Alas! this is a sad story! I fear me, if your master cannot discover to whom he gave it, it will go heavily with him.'

'Indeed it will! I have, therefore, come to ask you if you know George Cecil—a modest young man—for he may be able to do my master some service, by finding out by his description if it were any of the courtiers that played my master so falsely.'

'George Cecil' repeated Mistress Anne with surprise.

'Yes, ma'am; he first said his name was George Faithful, but afterwards he said it was George Cecil, and that you knew him, as he was a secretary, or had been, to the great Lord Exeter.'

CHAPTER XII.

THE eyes of Ruth were fixed upon the young secretary with the earnest attention of one who felt that he might conceive of some way of serving her master. At length she gave utterance to her hopes and wishes, saying with emotion:

'Oh, good Master Cecil, if you can think of any way to help us, do it, for my dear young mistress' sake!'

'Don't be so bold, my good Ruth, to address——'

What Mistress Anne would have added Ruth could not guess, for the young man lifted his finger, and catching her eye, said in a low tone:

'Hush, Mistress Anne! The maid

is right. Do not interrupt her. I will do all I can, Ruth, to aid your master! You say he was taken to Newgate?

'Yes, like a very criminal with irons on his hands!'

'This is indeed rough usage for a man who is not yet been found guilty. Where did you leave your mistress?'

'At home in great distress too! She knew that I was coming hither, and she believes that you will do something for her.'

'She shall not be disappointed. Hasten at once to her and remain with her, and tell her that within two hours at the farthest I will see her! In the meanwhile I will exert myself all I can, and I trust that I shall bear to her good news!'

'My lord,' said Mrs Colville kindly, as he was going out, 'you have not breakfasted! you——'

'My lord!' repeated Ruth, amazed, gazing from one to the other.

'You have betrayed me Mistress Anne!' said the young man smiling, as he looked at Ruth's face and witnessed its expression of awe and surprise. 'I hope to have been plain George Cecil a little longer; but I trust that Ruth will keep my secret till I give her permission to divulge it!'

'Dear bless me! Tell me truly, Mistress Anne,' cried Ruth, looking both pleased and alarmed, 'is the young gentleman indeed a lord?'

'Yes, Ruth!' answered the house-keeper; 'since I have been so unfortunate as to betray his secret, which I was not, however, a party to, I will inform you that this is George Cecil, the youthful Marquis of Exeter!'

'Dear me! Forgive my boldness, my lord!' cried Ruth, dropping on her knees.

'There is no offence given, Ruth! Get up and hasten to thy young mistress, and stay with her till I come!'

'My poor young mistress!' sighed Ruth, with tears filling her eyes.

'What new grief is this, Ruth?'

'She will be so sorry and miserable when she hears that you are lord, a marquis! Oh, dear me! It will break her heart, for she loves you so! Now it will be all over with her. I would rather you would have been the poor secretary, and so one day you would have been married and lived so happy; but now it is all over with her!'

'Do not grieve, my good Ruth, without a cause,' said the youthful nobleman, smiling. 'When I fell in love with your mistress, I was then what I am now. I had learned to love her ere I saw her, from thy description of her, Mistress Anne, and when I saw her and found that she loved me as plain poor George Cecil, my heart it became wholly hers, and hers it is, and ever shall be, unless, indeed, she thinks that she is too good for a lord!—One such as lords are in these days,' he added, laughing.

'Oh, she will love you lord or clerk just the same! Oh, it will make her so glad to know that after all you are a lord, and love her still! Oh, I am ready to fly to tell her!'

'No, no, Ruth; you must not think of telling her at present. She might, you know, take alarm, and never see me more, not putting confidence in my sincerity. So, unless you desire

to separate us, keep the secret till

'Till when, my lord ?

'Till we are married !

'Oh, dear, what a surprisè ! But it will be so long !

'No longer than to-morrow, if she will consent to be mine.'

'Oh, joy, joy ! This is the happiest day of my life ! Miss Beatrice is to be a lady after all ! I always prophesied it !

'If you wish the prophecy to be fulfilled,' said the marquis with a smile, 'you must not fail to keep a secret, that may alarm her to discover it.'

'I will keep it, my lord ; but I wish her father, my master knew this.'

'He does ; I made known to him my name and rank last night, first pledging him to secrecy till I removed the seal.'

'That accounts for his delighted looks and his willing consent when he came up stairs. I thought then he had heard something that greatly pleased him about you.'

'And doubtless,' said Mistress Anne, 'he was more pleased at knowing that the young man, George Cecil, proved to be a nobleman well known to be virtuous and upright, rather than gratified at his merely being one. I did not know before, Ruth, that my noble young lord had seen Beatrice ; indeed, I was not aware that my praises of her beauty and worth, when he would come in here of an evening to talk with me, made such an impression upon him. I am delighted to hear of it ! My lord

Beatrice Goulbourne, though humble, will adorn your high rank by her beauty and virtues. You could not have made a better choice. She deserves, I am sure, the happiness that is in store for her. Does my lady marchioness, your mother, know all this ?

'Not yet. I have this morning told her that I have chosen my future wife, but that I shall not make known to her either her name or her rank until she beholds her as my bride. But linger not here, Ruth. Hasten home to thy mistress. I am going to see what I can do for her father, for I am convinced he is innocent.'

'Oh, my good lord marquis ! I am so overjoyed ! I feel now you can do something for him, you are so great and noble ! I will go now, my lord.'

'Keep the secret, Ruth,' he said, playfully raising his finger as she went out of the door.

'And is this indeed true, my lord ?' said Mrs. Anne after Ruth had departed. 'Have you indeed seen and loved this virtuous maiden, Beatrice ?

'I have, indeed, good Mistress Anne,' answered the young nobleman, who from a boy had loved the excellent housekeeper, and now that he was a man still respected her for her goodness of heart, and plain, practical sense, 'You so often discoursed to me of her, that I resolved to see her with my own eyes. So I went to the goldsmith's two weeks ago and made a trifling purchase, but could not get the sight of his daughter. But the next day being Sunday, I saw her come forth with her father

and go to conventicle. I followed them, and, unseen, gazed upon her during the sermon till I lost my heart. I tried afterwards to see her in passing the house, but was only yesterday gratified with a view of her at the balcony above the shop. Our eyes, by some mysterious sympathy, met! Our souls intermingled, and I felt from my heart that she would love me from that hour; for I felt that I had from the depths of my own being filled her spirit with my spirit. Thou knowest not, Mistress Anne, what written volumes there lie in one glance of the eye!

'I have been young, my lord,' answered the good housekeeper, with a smile. 'And how did you come to speak with her and learn from her own lips, as I understand from Ruth you did, that she loved you?'

'I saw an apprentice come out of the shop, as I stood at the corner of the street planning some way of seeing her, for I knew that in my own rank to approach her would alarm her and put her on her guard. When I saw her at the lattice I was on foot, and habited only in an ordinary suit, such as a merchant's son might wear, and which I often go abroad in to escape the annoyances of the attentions paid to my rank by the common people. So she could not know me to be a person much above her own station. This apprentice came loitering past me, swaggering like a seaman and humming a sailor's ballad. Said I to him, "My man, do you live with Master Goulbourne?" "That I do," he answered; "but I mean not to long.

These Dutch wars want lads o' mettle and I think I shall take to the sea, so heave-ho-yeo."

'He was going on when I followed him and said:

"What wilt thou take to leave thy master at once, and go into yonder inn where I saw a press-gang enter a moment since?" "What, be pressed, master?" said he. "Yes, I want thy place with the goldsmith. So if thou wilt go into the inn and suffer the duke's men to press thee, I will give thee ten gold pieces." "Done, my master!" he replied striking his hand in mine.

'So I gave him the money, saw him taken by the duke's men, and borne off. I then obtained a suit of clothes similar to his, and when night came offered myself to the goldsmith as his apprentice. But I will not now enter into the details of what followed—know that I saw the comely Beatrice; spoke with her: nay, for two hours held sweet discourse with her; and, ere we parted, we interchanged vows of eternal love!

'And she supposed you to be——'

'Only George Cecil, not an apprentice, but a poor clerk, a widow's son! Herein I told her truly, as my honored mother is a widow, and I am her secretary, and, as she often says, a poor one enough. Her father, however, discerned that I was no apprentice; and I frankly told him who I was, and asked his daughter at his hands. After his surprise had subsided, and he became convinced of my sincerity, he gave me his consent; promising at my request, to keep the secret from

his daughter. But I cannot linger here while he is in danger. No doubt he is the victim of some designing person, who I cannot be at a loss to suspect. But I will soon learn the facts, and exert myself in behalf of Beatrice's father.'

Thus speaking, the young nobleman left the room.

In rank, and social position he held one of the highest places in the kingdom, and to whom all good men looked to effect some great moral change in a court that was proverbial for its licentious courtiers.

The king was with the beautiful and voluptuous Lady Castlemaine, his mistress, playing with her child, and laughing off her importunities to have the infant boy created a duke, when a page entered and said:

'My Lord Marquis of Exeter, desires to speak with your majesty.'

'The Joseph of our royal court,' said Charles, laughing. 'It won't do to receive him in your drawing-room here, Castlemaine.'

'You are jealous of the handsome marquis, Carl!'

'I don't know but what I am; for he is the most popular man in the realm. I have to play Buckingham against him, or he would yet head a virtuous party that would make it go hard with us, Castlemaine. Au revoir, beauty belle! as my horse is at the door, and the procession waits for my coming forth, I will give my Lord Exeter a hearing in the vestibule. By the way, they say that the French minister hath taken umbrage at the affair this morning, and will go home! Let him! If we war with our cousin

Spain, we will take his Gibraltar from him. Sir Page, what hath become of my lord Chamberlain with my diamond clasp?' demanded the king, as he passed out of the door, grasping his short cloak, and holding it together for want of the jewel.

'He has not yet returned, your majesty.'

'Ah! here is my youthful cousin of Exeter!' said the king, extending his hand, which the young nobleman kissed upon his knee. 'How can I serve thee, fair cousin?'

'I have no favor to ask your majesty save that you will see if your royal signet is in its usual place, or hath been removed since yesterday.'

'Wherefore?' asked the king quickly.

'Because, your majesty, I learn that an honest goldsmith, to whom you gave a jewel to reset, did last night deliver it to a person who, as his authority, showed the jeweler your royal signet, and I have learned that you did not send him.'

'Fore God! I sent no one but my lord Chamberlain this morning, who sent me back word the goldsmith had already delivered it to Sir Peter Losley! But I sent not Sir Peter; and the jeweler I have commanded to be put under arrest if he do not bring forth the jewel presently. I have given the matter into the hands of my lord Chamberlain. But I know not what the issue is.'

'Here he is now, your majesty,' said a page.

'Well, my lord,' said the king, 'have you my jewel?'

'No, your majesty. I confronted

the goldsmith with Sir Peter Losley, and he confesses that he is not like the man to whom he declares he gave the jewel, on the faith of his calling himself Sir Peter Losley, and exhibiting your royal signet. So, suspecting him foully, I had him off to prison where he awaits your majesty's pleasure.'

'Did the jeweller say the man exhibited my signet to him?'

'Yes, your majesty.'

'This chimes with what you have just told me, lord of Exeter! Come with me both, my lords; I will see if my cabinet hath been disturbed where I keep my royal signet.'

The king rapidly traversed the hall, and entered a gorgeous apartment, at the extremity of which was a rosewood cabinet inlaid with silver. It contained several drawers, before which was dropped a curtain of silver and blue tisse. He raised the veil, and placing his hand on one of the drawers, he took a key to open it with, but could not turn it. In the effort the drawer came open!

'Some one hath been here!' cried the king angrily. 'The drawer is unlocked, and the lock tampered with and spoiled! Yet here is my seal safe! Ha, a silk thread of twisted blue and orange is caught in one of the rough edges of the gold chasing! This is not from my glove or cloak. There hath been foul play, my Lord of Exeter! Some one has been here since yesterday.'

'I suspected foul play, your majesty, for I believe Master Goulbourne honest.'

'And so do I now; some one hath

taken my seal away for the purpose of stealing the diamond clasp. This is as clear as light. Master Goulbourne is doubtless innocent. My lord chamberlain—but you are old and look fatigued; you, my Lord of Exeter, as you seem to interest yourself in the affair—ride to Newgate and have the goldsmith brought hither unbound and free. I will examine him fairly as to this mysterious circumstance. Let me find him here when I return from the procession of ambassadors. And look you, my lords, try and find out who wore last night cloak or glove of blue and orange silk! For this shred of thread hath caught in the signet from the hand that last night held it!

David Goulbourne was standing by a window in a cell in Newgate, his arms folded upon his breast, and his head sunk upon it, in an attitude of the deepest despondency. He had been in the cell about half an hour, but it seemed to him a period of years of misery. He thought of his degradation before his townsmen and the world, of the ruin of his estate and household, and more than all, of the danger to which his lovely daughter would be exposed deprived of her natural protector.

'But it is heaven's hand! I must try and bear it with all my patience,' he sighed. 'I trust that the guilty will be discovered and the innocent acquitted! But there seems little hope. They who have robbed me so artfully, will have the art to keep concealed. Alas! at the moment when, through my daughter, I was coming to such great honor and hap-

piness, to be so suddenly cast down: This noble youth will thus despise the maiden whom he has honored by his love. He will now forget me! Even should I recompense the king for the clasp with all my wealth, yet the ignominy of having purloined it would hang upon me and my name forever! Alas! this is a calamity from which none but the interposition of a merciful Heaven can relieve me! But who comes?"

'Sir,' said the keeper of the prison, as he unlocked the door of his cell, 'you will be glad to know that you are free!'

'Free? Is the clasp found?' cried the poor man with a heart overfull.

'I don't know. The Marquis of Exeter is here himself with an order to release you. I ask no questions.'

'The Marquis of Exeter! Then I am indeed remembered and have done him wrong!'

The keeper led him from his cell along the dark passage to the office where David beheld the young nobleman, in waiting for him. Lord Exeter grasped him by the hand and said:

'I have come to liberate you, my friend, by the king's order!'

'Is the clasp found?' cried David.

'Not yet; but the king has discovered that his cabinet has been forced and his signet removed from its place. He, therefore, believes that you gave the jewel to some one who bore it to you.'

'Thanks be to God!' exclaimed the goldsmith, clasping his hands together, and elevating his eyes to heaven in grateful praise. 'My noble lord, how shall I thank you for bearing to me this intelligence?'

'Not at all. The king wishes to see you after he returns from escorting in the Swedish Ambassador, and hear the account from your own lips. Be assured that you are acquitted as innocent whether the jewel be recovered or not; for the king has the strongest evidence that some other hand than his own hath had his signet. His majesty hopes by your means to discover the guilty one.'

'I will tell the king all I know, but I fear it will hardly lead to his detection, unless I see him again.'

'Would you know him then?'

'Without fail!'

'Come with me to see thy daughter and gladden her heart! You will have time while the king is absent. My carriage waits for you at the door.'

CHAPTER. XIII.

WHEN Ruth returned to the residence of the goldsmith, she was obligingly admitted by the soldier; but was compelled to pass through a crowd of curious neighbors, who, hearing of the arrest of David Goulbourne, had gathered about his door to learn the facts. She was not a little gratified to find from their words that they believed her master innocent of any attempt to appropriate to his own use the king's jewels.

Ruth found Beatrice awaiting her with impatience and earnest curiosity.

'Have you seen him?' was her first exclamation, as she took her hands in hers.

'Yes, and—oh—'

Ruth checked herself instantly at the 'oh!' for she had come near upon divulging the secret entrusted to her keeping, with the very first word she uttered.

'Oh, what?'

'I mean that I have seen him, and told him all! He said right, in saying Mistress Anne knew all about him. She gives *such* a good character of him! But you don't know all—'

'Was he there with her?' asked Beatrice, delighted at these words.

'Yes, indeed! I told him all! you don't know how sorry he looked!'

'And does he believe my father innocent?'

'As the babe! Dear me! How pale he looked when I told him he was in prison and you left alone! He told me to come right back to you, and stay with you, and to tell you to keep up heart, for he was in hopes he should be able to make master's innocence appear to the king!'

'Oh, how good and kind he is! I feared when he should hear this he would desert us!'

'Not he! He's too generous and noble—dear me, I like to have told!'

'Told what?'

'Why, how he said he'd marry you to-morrow, if you'd give your consent!'

'Why, Ruth!' exclaimed the blushing and happy maiden, in a slight accent of reproof. 'This is your own making up!'

'Not I! But if he asks you, I hope you won't refuse. He is everything to make you happy, I wish—'

'Wish what? How you check your words!'

'I wish you could hear Mistress Anne talk about him! And she is so delighted too! He knew you from her sayings, just as well as if he'd been acquainted with you all his life!'

'Then he is indeed George Cecil, and a secretary, and just as he said?'

'Well, not exactly like. But he'll tell you himself, when he comes.'

'Is he coming here?' asked Beatrice, surprised.

'He said he would be here as soon as he could go to the king, perhaps in two hours. It is most that now; before coming straight home to you, I went round to say a word to Spankie; coz I feared he'd hear about master's arrest, and feel worried about me; and so I saw him and told him all about it, and how you had a lover—'

'Ruth, Ruth!'

'It is true! Spankie said he would come round as soon as he could, and try and comfort you. Hist! There is wheels! It is a coach with arms on it! Who can it be to stop here! she cried running to the lattice.

'Your father! and lord—I mean George Cecil! Joy! joy! he is free!'

'Who is free?' gasped Beatrice, hardly daring to believe her ears.

'I—I, my child!' cried her father, clasping her to his bosom.

'Free and safe! Oh, this is too much!' she cried with gushing tears, as she clung to him.

'Thank, next to heaven above, this young man, my daughter!' said David as he turned and directed her attention to George Cecil, who stood behind him.

'You have my thanks, a daughter's grateful thanks, sir!' she said, going

up to him and offering him her hand.

'How shall I repay you?'

'By resigning to me this lovely hand, from this hour,' as he pressed the hand he held to his lips.

Beatrice dropped her eyes in sweet confusion, while the glow of pleasure mingled in her cheek with the blushing tints of maidenly shame.

'I will take this gentle silence for assent, sweet Beatrice,' he said, as he drew her, half resisting, half yielding, to his breast, to which he folded her for an instant, ere she broke from the dear imprisonment, and once more cast herself into her smiling and approving father's arms.

'Have they found the clasp, master?' cried Ruth, who was as happy as she could be.

'Not yet, but the king has discovered that some one has been making use of his signet, and so acquits Mr. Goulbourne of all guilt. Nevertheless, he is to go to the king to show him how the clasp was given, and to describe the individual.'

'Then my father is acquitted with honor!'

'Yes, and I am in hopes will be able to confound his enemies!'

'What noise is that below?' asked David, as he heard voices in altercation. 'I trust no more mishap to us!'

'I will come up! I will see him! I have much to say for him!' cried an earnest voice at the street door.

'It is the cordwainer, master!' said Ruth, who had gone to the window. 'He insists on seeing you, and the guard keeps him back.'

'I will see him,' said George Cecil, leaving the room. The next moment he appeared, followed by the honest cordwainer.

'Master Goulbourne, I have just heard about your affair. I was at conventicle, or should have heard it sooner. Don't you know I cautioned you last night, when you delivered the jewel to the two men? I told you he who called himself Sir Peter Losley did not look like that knight. But you answered me short about his showing the king's signet?'

'What did you see Mr. Goulbourne deliver the clasp?' asked Lord Exeter, with surprise.

'That did I, sir, and warned him at the time. And what is more, I have now come here to say that I am ready to bear witness before the king, that I saw Master Goulbourne deliver the jewel into a man's hands, who called himself Sir Peter Losley, the king's master of the wardrobe, who did not favor the knight in the least.'

'This will be useful to Mr. Goulbourne,' said George Cecil; 'you must accompany him before the king.'

'That I will do cheerfully, sir!'

'Do you know who the person was who received the jewel?' continued the young nobleman.

'No; but I would know both him and his man again if I saw 'em in Hommadon!'

'I trust that you will be able to recognise him!' answered Lord Exeter. 'I wish you to be ready here to go with Mr. Goulbourne to the palace by noon, at which time the king will have returned to White Hall.'

'I will be on the spot, sir,' replied the cordwainer, stoutly—

'In the meanwhile I will go to attend to some affairs that call for my oversight,' said the young marquis. 'I shall be back here at a quarter to twelve. I will instruct the guard to let no one in, Mr. Goulbourne, but by your permission.'

'Thank you, sir,' said David, as he followed his noble benefactor to the door, where he took a respectful and grateful leave of him, while Ruth made him a very low curtsey. Beatrice interchanged with him a rapid glance of confidence and love, and then said, turning to Ruth, smiling.

'Methinks you have become very ceremonious towards your gallant of last night! You spoke to him and acted while he was here as if he had been the king, or a lord at the least. The awe has not left your face yet.'

Ruth interchanged a look with her master, and both smiled, when the latter seeing thereby that Ruth had the secret, and fearing they would betray their trust, took Beatrice by the hand, and said cheerfully,

'Come, since things are coming round so well, let us finish our breakfast, late as it is, for you know I did but taste it when I was called up from the table by my lord Chamberlain.'

'This has been a day of events, father!'

'It has indeed! Come Ruth, prepare the table again.'

'It only needs,' said Ruth, 'to discover the rogues who took the clasp to make this day end as it should,

unless Miss Beatrice will consent to be married this evening.'

'Why, Ruth! you are too—'

'Too what?' said Ruth slyly.

'Too forward.'

'Well, if you knew—'

'Ruth, come and place my chair,' said the goldsmith. 'If you have any secrets, keep them till another day; we must eat now, d'ye hear?'

The goldsmith then sat down to the table, from which four hours before he had been called up by the lord Chamberlain, to deliver to him the clasp for the king. He did not commence his repast without acknowledging, in a fervent blessing, the mercies which had been vouchsafed to him and his, in his remarkable deliverance from the dungeons which had menaced him.

We will now follow the marquis of Exeter, who had no sooner got into his carriage, than he ordered his coachman to drive to 'York Buildings.' Upon reaching them he stopped at the door of the residence of Lord Bresseles, and alighted.

He found the nobleman in, and was received by him with friendly courtesy, Lord Bresseles looking as if he felt himself honored by the visit of the popular and rich young marquis, who, however, rarely mixed in the society of the dissipated young nobles of the court.

'It is as rare to see you, my dear marquis, as a lark in winter.'

'You seem to be just going out—I will not detain you.'

'No, I have just come in! I have not yet taken off my riding coat and

spurs. I went out hoping to see the fight between the ambassadors, but it was over ere I got to the ground. The Spaniards protected their coach horses with chain harness, and placed a man to protect each of the six horses, so that the French were completely foiled in trying to cut the harness or slay the horses! Did you see the battle?"

'No, I was at home. By the by, why are you not with the procession, my lord? I feared I should find you out!'

'It is too dull an affair for me! Where are you, that you are not there, one of the first nobles of the realm? But the procession should be back ere long.'

'The truth is, a friend of mine is in ill favor with the king, laboring under a suspicion, and I wish you would do me the favor to go with me to White Hall and bespeak the king's good will for him, and assist him out of his troubles.'

'A friend of yours! To be sure I will, my dear marquis! Who is it? Buckingham or Monmouth?'

'I will name him, when we reach the palace, my lord!'

'Very well. I will go now!'

'Not this moment, but only be there when his majesty returns! It will be by twelve o'clock.'

'I will serve you if I can. I will be there! The king has before this obliged me in several things! But you are not going?'

'I have no time to linger, my lord,' answered the marquis, rising, and glancing at a surcoat that lay upon a chair, the sleeve of which was richly laced, with silken lace of inwoven

orange and blue. Upon discovering this, he betrayed only by the sparkle of his eyes his secret satisfaction. It confirmed his suspicions that Lord Bresseles was the man who had received the clasp from David Goulbourne; for Ruth, it will be recollected, had told him about the visit of his nobleman, and his evident intention to make captive the maiden. When, therefore he heard of David's arrest, and the facts which preceded it, his suspicions at once fell upon Lord Bresseles; and they were strengthened almost to conviction by David's accurate description of the person to whom he had delivered the jewel. So positive was he that Lord Bresseles was the guilty man, that as we have seen, he went boldly to his house, where his suspicion was resolved into certainty by the discovery of the laced surcoat, a thread in which his keen eye saw drawn up as if it had been caught by some point. All this he took notice of while he talked with Lord Bresseles; and became so convinced of his guilt, that he did not hesitate to make use of any reason for bringing him to White Hall.

'An elegant surcoat, my lord! Is this the latest style?' he said carelessly taking up the garment.

'Yes; the fashion introduced by the king last month. Here is the vest to it! You should get one?'

I have not before seen so elegant a pattern. If you are not going to wear this to-day, I should like to show it to my tailor.'

'By all means! Mingo, take the surcoat to my Lord Exeter's carriage.'

'You will be there at twelve, my lord, I trust, for your presence will be of most essential service in bringing my friend to peace with the king.'

'I will not fail you, my dear marquis,' answered the nobleman, as his visitor took leave.

'I have the real culprit now,' said the Marquis of Exeter to himself, as he re-entered his coach. 'With this surcoat I will condemn him!'

'I wonder what can be Exeter's motive in calling on me so unexpectedly and asking my influence!' mused Lord Bresseles, as he saw the carriage drive off. 'Doubtless he seeks some political influence, and wants to gain mine! He shall have only what he pays well for. If I serve him in this friend of his, he must serve me some other day. I wonder who it is! I may not like to ask the king in his behalf; for his majesty is jealous of me touching his pretty Stewart, that he sets off against Castlemaine! But when I get this poor goldsmith's daughter into my power, I will show the king a prize of beauty that will make him envy me the possession of it! Markham!'

'My lord!' answered his valet, entering the room.

Have you all ready for our adventure to-night, the ruffians all hired, and masques for all?

'It shall be done, my lord!'

'Now that we have got the father safe in Newgate, the lamb is ours without resistance. What shall we do with this jewel? for now that I have it, I may as well keep it!'

'By and by, send it over to Holland

a diamond at a time, and sell it to the Jews!'

'Well proposed! What noise is that?'

'The trumpets and drums, my lord! The king is escorting the ambassadors into the town!'

'Have my horse presently brought. I must ride to Whitehall. See that nothing is wanting to make our success perfect to-night!'

'I will, my lord!'

The king at length reached his palace, and entering it, his eye fell upon the Marquis of Exeter, with the goldsmith standing just behind him, and the cordwainer a little to his right.

'Ah, well, my lord! So you have the goldsmith with you, I see!'

'Yes, your Majesty! And I think, moreover, I have discovered who took the jewel, and made use of your signet!'

'Ah, so? Then by the Red Cross! I will make him bleed for it, be he lord or clown. Come in hither to this room, and let us hear what thou hast to say!'

The king entered a gorgeous but small ante-room to his crown room, and seating himself all booted and spurred as he had alighted from his horse, said:

'Now, we will hear, my lord!'

'This surcoat, your majesty will see, is laced with the same thread, blue and orange, which was caught in the chasing of the signet!'

'By the mass, yes! And a thread is drawn out! I will match it forthwith!' and the king went to his cabinet, and taking the signet, com-

pared the shred attached to it with the part that had been unravelled out, and found it to match in length, as in the colors and texture. 'You see my Lord of Exeter, it is the same, and was torn from this! Now whose coat is this?'

'Hither approaches my Lord Bresseles, your majesty. Please ask him who owns the coat?'

'Ah, my lord, you are welcome,' said the king, as Lord Bresseles approached and kissed his hand. 'We were just looking at this surcoat, my lord. Know you whose it is?'

'Mine, your majesty. Exeter did me the honor to borrow it of me, being taken with the pattern. But I did not expect he would honor me by showing it to your majesty!'

The brow of the king became dark as night. The cordwainer shrunk before him, and even David Goulbourne was moved with awe. The Marquis of Exeter stood calmly observing both the king and Lord Bresseles.

'My lord,' said the king, 'your lace is not the best! It ravel. See, I found this shred attached to my signet! It is not good lace, my lord! You should have gotten better lace! It is treacherous lace, very! My Lord Bresseles, do not turn pale! A little bad lace is not much matter! Nay, do not kneel! It is no crime for a noble to wear bad lace to his sleeves!'

'Pardon me, your majesty!'

'Ah,' cried the king, changing his bitter tone of irony to one stern and commanding, 'so then you confess yourself a robber!'

'It was but in sport, your majesty!'

'I know no sports that will excuse breaking the lock of a king's cabinet, and using his signet to procure royal jewels from his goldsmith!'

'I have the jewels, your majesty!'

'And I will have them soon. I shall at once despatch officers to your lodgings and search them! In the meanwhile make a full confession, especially how you gained access to my cabinet.'

Lord Bresseles, who had been completely taken by surprise, now related that he had obtained the signet by means of a page, whom he had bribed; and that he had took the jewel merely as a jest, intending to return it! But, being embarrassed, and unable to meet the clear eye of the Marquis of Exeter, who, he felt, was reading his soul, he made but lame matter of his defence.

It increased rather than abated the anger of the king, who on the spot and before them all, condemned him to pay the value of the clasp to the goldsmith, in consideration of the imprisonment he had suffered, and to be committed to the Tower for one year, while Markham was banished the kingdom.

This just decision was not only gratifying to the Marquis of Exeter, who thought he foresaw in it the reformation of the king's lax government of his realm, but to David and the cordwainer who heard it.

The goldsmith knelt and kissed the king's hand, and thanked him for the gracious manner in which he had tak-

en up his cause. Lord Exeter also thanked his majesty; and then the three hastened in the coach to convey the happy issue of an affair that had threatened so heavily to Beatrice and Ruth.

The joy of Beatrice we will leave to the imagination of our readers. After all that her lover had done in her father's behalf, it will be supposed she was willing to make him happy, by setting an early day for their union.

After a playful contest, she consented to reduce the month.

She was at first disposed to make it to a day.

The next morning, therefore, they were married in St. Paul's church,

privately; but no pen can adequately express the surprise of Beatrice, when at the close of the ceremony, she heard her husband congratulated by the Bishop by the title of Lord Marquis of Exeter, and herself as the Marchioness of Exeter! Nor will we attempt to picture her joy, when surprise gave place to the full, sweet, delightful conviction of the whole truth.

Ruth, be it recorded in her lasting honor, faithfully had kept the secret; and not long afterwards she made Spankie the footman happy, and the marquis, to reward her fidelity, gave her a marriage portion of a thousand pounds, and made Spankie the head steward of the household.

THE END.

